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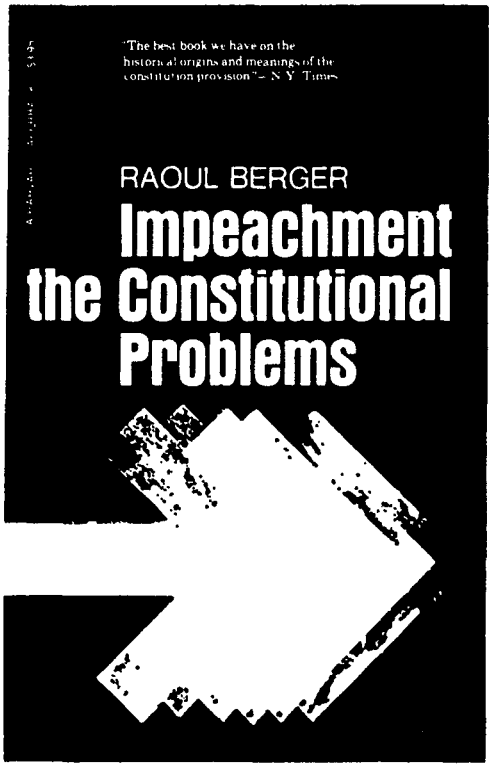
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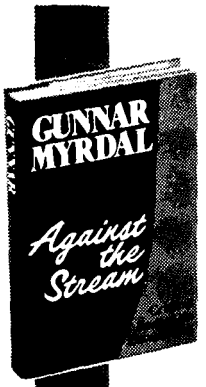

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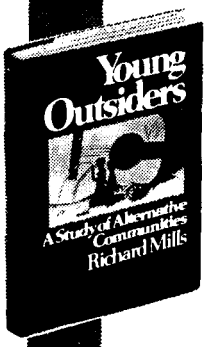

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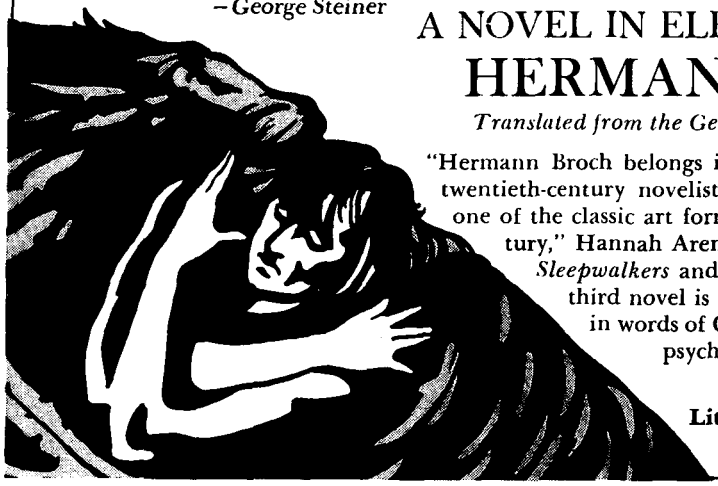

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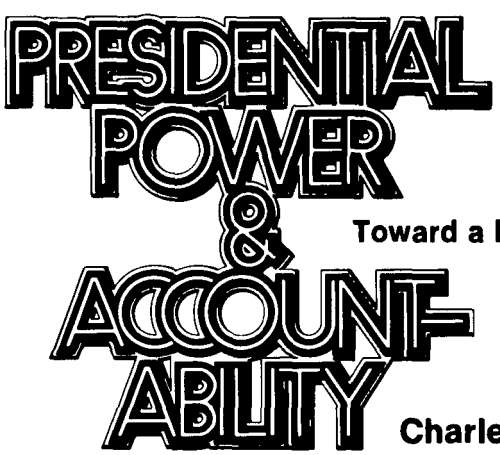

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Michael Harrington

The Oil Crisis—Socialist Answers

The energy crisis illuminates the nature of late-capitalist society. Let us hope that it will also make possible a political challenge to it.

I will not argue the details of this statement. Dankwart Rustow's article in this issue provides ample proof (and I, too, have documented the point in a series of articles in the *Newsletter of the Democratic Left*). Let me simply recall the facts before proceeding to some practical problems. In general, late capitalism is characterized by the integration of public and private bureaucracies within a (sophisticated) profit-maximizing framework; it is a system of corporate collectivism. The oil companies, as Rustow shows, have been the special beneficiaries of extraordinary aid from Washington: they were the chosen agents of American foreign policy in the Middle East and, through the deductibility of all the taxes they paid to the oil-producing nations, were able to evade 50 percent of their American tax responsibilities. The oil companies were protected by the oil import program started by Eisenhower and ended, with some reluctance, by Nixon; and they received a number of outright gifts, most notably the multibillion-dollar depletion allowance.

All of this was not simply intolerable from the viewpoint of minimal democratic values; it also resulted, as Rustow shows, in a tremendous misallocation of resources (as in the "Drain America First" policy), which has made us so vulnerable to the present crisis. As a result, the democratic and social control of the oil industry is on the agenda. "It is quite clear," the United Automobile Workers said in a statement on February 15, "that the interests of *both equity and efficiency require a much greater degree of public control of the energy sector than exists at the moment*" (emphasis in the original).

The question is, how? The issue is incredibly complex, and one must deal with the distortions and waste of a generation of corporate-governmental cooperation to the detriment of the common good. In what follows, I propose to take up only two specific aspects of this multifaceted problem (and even though I thus limit my subject matter, the treatment will still have to be brief and schematic): the profits of the empire of oil, and the very structure of the energy industry.

At first glance the profits issue seems simple enough. Should we not opt for an excess-profits tax, as the AFL–CIO has demanded? Nixon's proposals in this area are, as usual, fraudulent. His levy of "windfalls" is really an excise tax per barrel of crude, having nothing to do with profits; and, in any case, the hearings before Frank Church's Senate subcommittee on the multinationals revealed that the oil giants have already "stockpiled" tax credits to offset the effect of the Nixon tax for the next five years. Even so, would it not be possible to come up

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with a law that really gets at the enormous, and ill-gotten, federally subsidized gains of the oil industry?

My heart says yes (and I would certainly not foreclose giving political support to such an attempt, particularly if it comes from the labor movement); but my head counsels caution. The oil companies, given their privileged status in the Internal Revenue Code, are past masters at creative cost accountancy. Therefore, in the absence of structural change within the industry that would give the public the opportunity to monitor and contest the corporate definition of profits, I fear that the main beneficiaries of such a law would be the lawyers and accountants hired to evade it. This is particularly true in the case of multinational corporations which, with a little judicious juggling, can choose the country where they want to surface, or hide, their profits.

But of even greater moment in this area is the need to cope with the industry's counterattack—in particular the assertion that its profits are, and have been, too low and should be doubled. It was a stirring scene when Senator Jackson hectored the oil executives about their profits, but something more than populist anger is required if we are to deal with a very sophisticated, and very revealing, argument currently being developed by the oil companies and their intellectual agents.

A *Wall Street Journal* editorial of February 7 put the reactionary case quite well:

> The commanding reality [the *Journal* said] is that if the energy crisis is solved, the world's petroleum industry, which is largely the United States multinationals, will have to invest $1 trillion by 1985. Half of this will have to come out of industry profits. The Chase Manhattan Bank estimates that this will require an annual 18% earnings increase as an average over the 1970–1985 period, a number some economists equate with a 15% to 20% return on stockholders' equity.

In fact, the *Journal* continued, current profit rates are well below that 15–20 percent figure. The oil return is 9.6 percent; the entire industry makes 11.8 percent on its equity. Therefore, the profits should be raised, not lowered—and those who attack the depletion allowance, the foreign write-offs, the special treatment of intangible drilling expenses, and the other federal subsidies are only soft-headed liberals.

THIS ARGUMENT is, as will be seen, outrageous and wrong, yet it has the unintended consequence of demonstrating that structural change

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is an immediate, practical necessity. For once you accept the present industry as a given, it is extremely hard to escape from the *Wall Street Journal*'s antisocial conclusions. Which is one more reason why the present industry has to be basically transformed.

First of all, there is the marvelous fact that the main authority for the *Journal*'s figures *is* that well-known and impartial scholarly institute, the Chase Manhattan Bank. Chase Manhattan is, of course, the preserve of the Rockefeller family and thereby the lineal descendant of that Standard Oil trust, which was broken up more than half a century ago. Its representatives sit on the board of directors of Arco, Royal Dutch, and Standard Oil of New Jersey, and they manage a fund for Mobil. Indeed, the Federal Trade Commission reported in late February that Chase Manhattan "is both the largest shareholder in Atlantic Richfield and the second largest in Mobil. Clearly it isn't in Chase Manhattan's interest to promote rigorously competition between them." It is typical of current American practice that such an organization presents itself as a disinterested adviser to the government and the people.

Second, the *Wall Street Journal* here propounds a "socialist" theory of capitalism. The function of profits, it turns out, is not to make money for the stockholders, pay higher executive compensation to the managers, etc., but to finance further investment so that the needs of America may be filled. Thus, the source of risk capital in the United States is no longer the abstemious entrepreneur but the consumer who is charged for his future services in the present prices. The money market is not mentioned (in classic theory it was supposed to exercise some kind of an independent check on the judgment of the owners and managers).

But third, the decision as to what form $1 trillion of investment will take is to be left to a private board room not even responsive to Wall Street, much less to the American people. Those $1 trillion worth of choices will undoubtedly have more influence on the lives of 21st-century America than almost all of the laws passed by the legislatures of the several states and, indeed, than most of the bills approved by the Congress and signed by the President.

Fourth, there is every reason to believe that the companies are uniquely positioned to make the wrong investments. They have an enormous, and integrated, stake in an existing energy industry (since the oil corporations also own our coal, our geothermal properties, our shale oil leases, etc.). There are therefore "perverse incentives" motivating them not to put money into a technology that might be socially useful, environmentally benign, efficient, *and* deleterious to their established interests.

Fifth, the companies are not only going to raise that $1 trillion from the consumers; they are also going to require the taxpayers to guarantee their profits. The Council of Economic Advisers stated in its 1974 Report that

> The nation has the capability to become self-sufficient in energy production. This capability will, however, require substantial capital investment and large expenditure on research and development. The private sector will be willing to make the needed investment only if there is reasonable assurance that returns will be adequate to justify the commitment of resources to long-term investments.

So Nixon proposes a $10 billion federal gift for research and development, and Senator Jackson comes up with his own version of essentially the same scheme.

All of these things add up to a shocking capitalist indictment of late capitalism. Of the traditional rationalizations for profit—inventiveness, risk-taking, abstinence from consumption, the hazarding of private monies, and so on—literally nothing remains. The process envisioned by the *Wall Street Journal* and the Council of Economic Advisers is social in every single aspect save one: *that private managers will set all the basic priorities while financing their preferences with consumers' and taxpayers' funds.* Adam Smith would be appalled.

More practically, the *Wall Street Journal*'s argumentation emphasizes the need for *structural* change in the entire energy industry. The current rules of the game are designed to make government the servant of the companies, and the *Journal*'s case is as logical as it is unconscionable. It is not enough to try, probably unsuccessfully, to reduce profits or to roll back prices, laudable as those programs are; there clearly has to be a new mode of decision-making. And again the question is posed: how?

IN THE NOT-SO-LONG RUN, the oil industry should be socialized and its basic priorities

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should be determined by a democratic political process within the nation and within the industry. In the short run, a number of organizations—the Minnesota AFL–CIO, the Massachusetts State Senate, the Service Employees Union, and possibly in the near future the AFL–CIO itself—have suggested nationalization as the answer. It is precisely because I am a socialist that my response to that idea is "yes and no."

The European experience with nationalization, as I documented at length in my book, *Socialism,* has shown that this device is much more complicated—and ambiguous—than the early socialists thought. Many nationalized concerns behave exactly like, or worse than, their private similars; the owners of the industry that is being nationalized (which usually occurs when private policies have proved catastrophic, as is now the case) are handsomely rewarded for their past misdeeds; the existing private technostructure of executives normally ends up in charge of the public institution; the main beneficiaries of the cheap goods and services of the public sector are the largest buyers, i.e., big corporations in the private sector; and so on.

This is not to say that I am against public property, in the oil industry or elsewhere in "the commanding heights" of the economy; far from it. It is, however, to argue that the fine print—the precise structural details of the nationalization and the economic setting in which it takes place—is often decisive. One says "nationalize the oil industry" and, particularly in America where our experience in this regard is extremely limited, it seems that things will really be fundamentally different, that a very radical proposal has been placed on the table. That can be the case; and it can most emphatically not be the case at all. Is it inconceivable that an industry nationalized under the Nixon (or Ford) administration might be run by the very manipulators who have worked hand-in-glove with Washington for more than a generation against the people's interest? Socialists must be more candid about the nationalization issue than anyone else. Only in a country as ideologically conservative as America could this proposal still seem simple and advanced.

That is why I think that those of us who see the need for structural change must be very specific as to how it is to be accomplished. The ideal first step, in my opinion, would be the one urged in Canada by the New Democratic party: *nationalize one existing company.* It is much more likely that the government could win actual operating control over such an enterprise than that it could assert its priorities over an entire industry. It would also be possible to attempt the internal changes that are necessary: *participation of the employees in the decision-making process; a public review board and an ombudsman to hear challenges from consumers and environmentalists;* etc. (The particular internal changes I mention have been advocated by the UAW as part of its public energy program.)

At the same time, I think the democratic Left should fight vigorously for the Stevenson Bill establishing a TVA-type, public corporation for the research and development of energy reserves on public land (which amounts to 50–75 percent of the total). This, it seems to me, is the real alternative to the Nixon–Jackson schemes for a federal technological investment that would go, in effect, to the private companies.

There are many, many other suggestions one could make—for the National Energy Policy Commission which the AFL–CIO and the Mineworkers urge, for a Department of Energy as the UAW proposed. And it is urgent to provide adequate unemployment compensation and federally funded jobs to workers displaced by the crisis. But I want to emphasize here the radical nature of our plight—and the need for the Left to be truly radical, which is to say, specific, hard-headed, and informed, in its proposals.

The problem, if I can go back to a cliché of the sixties, is not a part of the solution. The energy crisis is primarily the result of a partnership between Washington and the industry that followed the latter's priorities to the detriment of the American people. The *Wall Street Journal,* the Council of Economic Advisers, the industry, and the President now want to further socialize an essentially private decision-making process. The Left must propose democratic and social alternatives that proceed step by carefully reasoned and tested step, not simply a change in the title to the energy industry, but of its fundamental property relationships as well. □

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On Terrorism

We are in for an increasingly hard time of it. Like bad money in circulation, individual terrorism and acts of violence committed in the name of "the revolution" have a way of showing up cyclically. While the California kidnapping of the young Hearst woman—still unresolved at the time of this writing—may not necessarily stimulate similar criminal actions in the country, such deeds are now clearly part of a worldwide phenomenon.

The current wave of terrorism has added a whole new vocabulary to international language: Palestinian Fedayeen, Uruguayan Tupamaros, Indian Naxelites, Chilean Miristas, etc.—all living by "the deed": kidnapping, summary trial and execution, skyjacking, and airport or Munich massacres. It is a sordid and increasingly repulsive story.

The classical socialist and Marxist case against individual terrorism is well-known and still valid. An absolute faith in some metaphysical ideal ("the revolution") is matched by an absolute distrust of living people. As the Leninists substitute a party for the working class, then the party organization for the party, and a central committee for the organization, ending with the ultimate substitution of a Stalin for the central committee; so the terrorists substitute themselves for the broad, open democratic movement, ultimately arriving at the criminal deed as a substitute for the revolution.

Further, if ends and means are so intertwined that one cannot be detached from the other without damage, then evil means can only lead to evil results. The lesson of Ferdinand Lassalle's famous play, *Franz von Sickingen,* has not changed over the years. Nor the argument of efficacy, that terror is counterproductive and destructive, leaving one further from his goals than before. An independent Arab Palestine seems as remote as ever; bourgeois democratic Uruguay has become a military dictatorship; the Naxelites of India were hunted down like dogs by Mrs. Gandhi's reserve police; the fate of Allende's Chile is fresh in our memories.

Whatever success terrorist tactics yield is invariably momentary and passing, dependent upon catching the enemy by surprise. But, thrown off balance for a moment, the enemy quickly recovers, mobilizes his vastly superior resources (the repressive apparatus of state power) and, assured by long experience that he need not worry that terror will stir the masses into action, he proceeds with a vengeance. Even the short-run results must be questioned. What will have changed for the hungry and poverty-stricken of California if $2 million, $4 million, or even $6 million in food is distributed among them? The need for jobs, training, education, housing, etc. will be precisely what it was before. The political struggle to overturn reactionary Reaganism will remain. Except that this struggle may be more difficult now, given an inevitable hardening of the Right and a weakening of the Left, thanks to the often confused, ambiguous response of the "California Left" to the Hearst kidnapping.

When Abby Hoffman's Yippies and a clownish Jerry Rubin carried out symbolic acts against American institutions in a series of pranks, one was amused, or not amused, according to one's sense of humor. But when Jerry Rubin expresses an ill-concealed admiration for the tactics of the Symbionese Army of Liberation, it becomes a different matter. In emphasizing the argument that terror is counterproductive (which it certainly is), the Left has perhaps unconsciously tended to play down *the profound moral repulsion with which it ought to reject the slightest suggestion of individual terror.* It matters not one iota that Patricia Hearst is a "rich girl," or that she is related to the notorious Hearst family. She rates the same freedom from fear, terror, and kidnapping that belongs to us all. The action against her is profoundly immoral. The Left needs to affirm Gandhi's notion of the sacredness of human life.

And finally, if it is possible to understand—without excusing or justifying—the desperate action of a militant black or other oppressed individual, coming out of a ghetto or refugee camp, humiliated and frustrated his entire life, what is one to say about the self-styled, middle-class revolutionaries egging him on from the sidelines? In the first case, we are dealing with tragedy and hopelessness that ought to spur us on to reaffirm the need for basic changes in the society; in the second case, we are confronted by a cynical elitism that warrants contempt and rejection. —S. P. □

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Dankwart A. Rustow

Petroleum Politics 1951–1974

A Five-Act Drama Reconstructed

The Arab countries hide beneath their sands most of the world's known petroleum, accounting for one-third of total production and three-fifths of shipments in interregional trade. The United States, with only 6 percent of the earth's population, uses up as much as 30 percent of its commercial energy. Seven oil companies, five of them American, are among the 16 leading multinational corporations, their combined sales totaling $63 billion, or more than the gross national product of India and Pakistan.

In the ten weeks from October 17 to December 25, 1973, the Arab and United States governments and the multinational oil companies acted out the climax of a tense drama, with the nation of Israel, the American consumer, and the peoples of Japan and Europe assigned for the moment to the supporting cast. But this climax was only the fourth of five acts, with the finale still in the future.

Act One: Company Control (1951–1955)

THE DRAMA as a whole begins more than two decades ago as Iran's aging, aristocratic, principled, nationalist, tearful prime minister, Muhammad Mossadegh, proclaims the nationalization of the Iranian assets of the British Petroleum Company, then constituting one of the largest oil-producing complexes in the world. The British Royal Navy briefly appears in the wings but decides against gunboat diplomacy and steams off. Enter instead the multinational oil companies, also known as the Seven Sisters: Exxon, Shell, B.P., Texaco, Standard of California, Gulf, and Mobil.* Secure in their control of the Middle East's remaining oil production, of two-thirds of the world's tanker fleet, and more than half of non-Communist refinery capacity, they refuse to load, ship, or sell what little oil Mossadegh's nationalized operation manages to produce. Enter, too, the Arab countries, foremost Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, which under the aegis of the Seven Sisters quickly augment their production by whatever is missing from Iran, and then some.

Mossadegh by now is on the outs with the Shah, the Iranian army, and the Western powers. Unable to sell his oil yet refusing to retreat from nationalization he is reduced to shifting alliances, now with reactionary *mullahs* and then with the Communist Tudeh party. The climax of the First Act comes in 1953, when Mossadegh is overthrown in a

* The oil multinationals have a disconcerting habit of changing names. Thus Exxon was formerly known as Esso or Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey, Mobil as Socony or Standard Oil Co. of New York, and British Petroleum as the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. Similarly the Standard Oil Co. of California is also known as Stancal, Calso, or Chevron. In the present essay they will all be referred to by their official names as of early 1974.

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military coup secretly encouraged by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Meanwhile, across the Persian Gulf, the king of Saudi Arabia, following an earlier precedent from Venezuela, signs a "50–50" profit-sharing agreement with Aramco, the joint subsidiary of four of the Seven Sisters. It gives the Saudis a share of oil income three times as large as that previously allowed to Iran, and it is hailed as a farsighted act of American statesmanship, in contrast to the perfidious skinflint ways of the imperialist British. But the increase to 50 percent is payable in "income tax," not "royalty," and as such comes under a special United States Treasury ruling making it deductible as a full credit against U.S. taxes on the foreign operations of American companies, including their joint subsidiaries. The increased payments, therefore, occasion no expense to the companies but are borne instead by the U.S. taxpayer. Just to make sure no one garbles his lines, an American Treasury expert briefly climbs into the souffleur's box to prompt Saudi officials on the appropriate revisions of their tax laws.

In the final scene, the same beneficent 50–50 scheme is extended to Iran, the team of helpful Americans this time not coming from CIA or Treasury but being headed by Undersecretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr. To save pride—the restored Shah is almost as proud as his archrival Mossadegh—Iran retains its "property" title in the oil fields on condition of returning their "operation" to the international oil companies. Just incidentally, B.P. agrees to yield three-fifths of these "operating" rights to other multinationals, five of them American, one British-Dutch, and one French. Of course there is full compensation, computed by sisterly agreement; and of course the British and French taxpayers are assigned a role just as helpful and statesmanlike as that vouchsafed to their American cousins.

As the curtain drops, the seven companies still dominate the stage, their rights confirmed and their profits at customary levels. The oil income of Middle Eastern governments has gone up from $200 million in 1950 to $1 billion in 1955. And the Western taxpayer has made his debut as the dupe of the play.

Act Two: The Stage Expands (1955–1970)

AFTER the hectic pace of Act One, Act Two seems all in slow motion. The predominance of the Seven Sisters is challenged by a number of newcomers: American independents (that is, companies with no previous sources of foreign petroleum), and companies from Western Europe, Japan, and even India—all of them bent on grabbing their share of the Middle East action, even if it means dividing profits 40 to 60 or perhaps 25 to 75. Luckily for the Seven Sisters, there are few good concessions to be had just then around the oil-rich Persian Gulf.

But after the Suez War of 1956 and the consequent closing of the Canal, the oil search shifts to Arab North Africa. The richest finds are made in Libya, and this time the Seven Sisters must share the bonanza with a dozen others. Libyan governments, too, find that they can drive harder bargains with a score of companies than any Persian Gulf country can with a single consortium.

Enter OPEC, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, founded in 1960 by Venezuela, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq, and joined in due course by all other sizable producers of the Third World. At first it tries the monopolist's ploy of reducing production to drive up prices, and hence its members' tax take. But OPEC members cannot impose any prorationing scheme on the companies, or even agree on one among themselves. Next OPEC tries more successful schemes, such as levying the 50 percent tax on top of (rather than including) the royalty, or getting companies to agree to a "posted price" for tax purposes that disregards the customary discounts offered by subsidiaries to their parent companies. As a result the 50–50 division of profits becomes 65–35 by 1965 and 70–30

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by 1969—and all this on the basis of larger rather than smaller production.

The combined pressure from independents and OPEC drives the Seven Sisters to seek new markets. In the years from 1955 to 1970, Western Europe and Japan, in a period of unheard-of industrial expansion, perform their secular switch from coal to oil. For coal is labor intensive and must be brought up from deeper and meagerer seams, whence its price steadily rises; while Middle East oil flows freely and the companies manage to keep its price at around $2 a barrel (f.o.b. Persian Gulf). Thanks to a fivefold jump in volume and a steady production cost of around 10¢ a barrel, the companies can afford to increase their payments to Middle Eastern governments from $1 billion in 1955 to $5 billion in 1969, while still doubling their own income from the Middle East from about $1 to $2 billion.

A notable exception to this spectacular expansion of markets for Middle Eastern oil is the United States. Here the independent companies, which produce oil at a cost of $1.50 or more, induce the federal government to impose rigid import restrictions. Their rhetoric is all national defense: If the domestic producer is allowed to drown in a flood of imports, where are we to get oil in an emergency? This argument is not just (as with watches) self-serving, it is contrary to all sense. Oil is an exhaustible resource, not a manufactured good. By refusing to buy it abroad when cheap and free from political strings, the United States (as will become clear in Act Three) is condemned to buying it dear and with strings. The import quota system of 1959, in the apt phrase of one critic, amounts to a "drain-America-first policy," designed to hasten—and not to ward off—the evil day.

Incidentally, while the quota idea comes from the independents, it is taken up without much grumbling by the multinationals who stand to make handsome profits by selling their "import tickets" to the highest bidders. The dunce of Act Two is the American consumer who, between protectionist prices granted to the independents and windfall profits accruing to the multinationals, is estimated to have spent an additional $3 billion to $5 billion per annum under the quota regime.

Act Three: OPEC Takes Charge (1970–73)

THE CURTAIN rises over the battlefields of the Third Arab-Israeli War of 1967. The Suez Canal is closed indefinitely, forcing tankers from the Persian Gulf to Europe to go twice as far around the Cape. A bulldozer rams the TAP-line which brings much of Saudi oil to the Mediterranean, and the Syrian government takes its time over allowing repairs. With demand for oil growing at about 10 percent a year in Europe and 17 percent in Japan, the world market is tighter than ever.

OPEC in late 1970 resolves to raise the tax (after royalty) from 50 percent to 55 percent, and companies operating around the Persian Gulf agree, in the vain hope of buying a five-year respite. Instead, there are almost continuous "negotiations" increasingly resembling dictates. When the Gulf countries get their 55 percent, Libya's Colonel Qaddafi demands 60 percent, since his oil is closer to Europe and lower in sulfur. Devaluations of the dollar provide the occasion for new increases in "posted prices." Meanwhile, Algeria, then Iraq, and then Libya proceed to nationalize Western companies one by one.

Contrasting negotiating styles in Tripoli, Tehran, and Riyadh add a touch of farce to the proceedings. Colonel Qaddafi, the Koran-quoting fundamentalist who seized power at the age of twenty-seven, extracts his concessions in hour-long fire-breathing harangues. The Shah, now firmly on his throne but worried about Soviet power to the north, invokes his reasonableness and friendship with the West to obtain equal or greater concessions—which in turn provoke bigger and better tantrums from Qaddafi. Sheikh Ahmad Zaki al-Yamani, the quick-witted, Harvard-trained oil minister of Saudi Arabia, protests

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his dedication to free enterprise and aversion to nationalization; instead, he proposes a scheme of "participation" whereby Saudi Arabia and neighboring sheikhdoms will take over an immediate 25 percent interest in the concessions, which is to rise year by year to 51 percent in 1981. The Shah celebrates Persian New Year by "nationalizing" foreign oil "operations" (the "properties," remember, had been nationalized by Mossadegh in 1951), but, reasonable as ever, he promises to let the companies have their customary amounts of oil at cost for the remaining years of the concession. The Kuwaiti legislature, not previously noted for its independence of spirit, balks at ratifying the participation deal: why take just 25 percent now, if Iraq already has taken 51 percent?

As Act Three draws to a close, it becomes hard, even for experts, to remember the "arguments" invoked or the successive "agreements" concluded. But amid all the shadowboxing, the Middle Eastern countries, now firmly in the vanguard of OPEC, have made three points quite clear. They alone, by sovereign power of decree if necessary, will decide how much oil is produced and offered in the world market. They and not the companies will get the lion's share of the proceeds—about 85 percent by 1973. And they have forced, for the first time in a quarter century, a substantial increase in the world price of crude petroleum. For subsequent increases the only ceiling in sight is a level ($8 or $9 a barrel?) at which industrial countries will substantially decrease their consumption, or a level ($10 or $12?) at which large quantities of new fuels—such as oil from shale or gas from coal—may become available in the uncertain future. Straining to learn what the traffic will bear, the Arabs and Iranians find out that it will bear a great deal. In 1970 their oil income still was under 6 billion; by late 1973 it lept to an annual rate of about $18 billion.

The seven companies, in the words of the chairman of B.P., are now little more than a "tax-collecting agency" for OPEC. Yet whatever the reversal of their Middle Eastern fortunes, they still control the world's distribution system for oil, they are maintaining (or, as we shall see, increasing) their profits, and they still are among the largest corporate giants in the economies of the Western countries.

Not surprisingly, the final scene of Act Three takes place in the United States where, from about the middle of 1972, the "energy crisis" slowly filters into public consciousness: schools closing for lack of heat, gas stations turning away customers, a major oil company advertising not the virtues or availability of its products but their imminent disappearance, the President's first "Energy Messages," and an article in *Foreign Affairs* urging a crash program for "energy independence" with a price tag of $60 billion.

By mid-1973, the crisis is widely attributed to our growing dependence on petroleum imports, particularly from unfriendly Arab countries. Senator Fulbright warns the Arabs not to be unreasonable lest more impatient Americans think of invading them, either directly or by Israeli or Iranian proxy. President Nixon pointedly asks Arab rulers to ponder the fate of Mossadegh (who could not sell his nationalized oil? Whom the CIA helped overthrow?—the President is too delicate to spell out his analogy). From the cover of *Newsweek* a young man in desert garb leers at the reader, his hand on the nozzle of a gasoline hose, under a headline proclaiming "The Arab Oil Squeeze." The *New York Times Magazine* asks more bluntly: "Can the Arabs Really Blackmail Us?"

The young Arab on the cover turns out to be a Jewish boy from Brooklyn doing some free-lance modeling in a Bedouin costume brought back from Israel. Other parts of the energy hullabaloo are, for the remainder of Act Three, almost equally misleading.

When the talk of energy crisis begins in 1972, the United States imports only about 3 percent of its petroleum from Arab countries, and petroleum itself accounts for only

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one-half of our primary energy consumption —the remainder being mostly natural gas and coal. Even after the lifting of the quota system in the spring of 1973, Arab oil imports amount to less than 6 percent of petroleum demand. Moreover, except for an insignificant spell in 1967, no Arab country, prior to October 1973, has ever banned *exports* to America; quite the contrary, for 14 years the Americans imposed an almost total ban on Arab and other *imports*.

By the winter of 1972–73 the United States faces two real problems with regard to petroleum: a slight decline in domestic production ever since 1970, and a shortage of port facilities and refinery capacity (particularly on the East Coast) to handle such additional imports as the federal government might allow. The first is a direct effect of the "drain-America-first policy," and the second an indirect one. For the large companies see little incentive for spending hundreds of millions on tanker ports or refineries to handle imports that the government has not yet allowed. In the resulting tight market, a third problem is posed by the same large integrated companies whose refineries give preference to their own retail outlets and thus tend to squeeze out independent competitors. All three circumstances contribute to the sporadic shortages, now of fuel oil and now of gasoline, throughout the last part of Act Three.

But the economics of import quotas, port construction, and refinery runs mean little to the houseowner without fuel, the parent whose children are sent away from unheated schools, or the motorist stranded at night. The sphinxlike Arab at the gas pump, instead, suggests a plausible origin of the riddle. Even before his appearance on the magazine cover, the multinational oil companies win several significant political and economic advantages: the freeing of imports, the reopening of the Alaska pipeline issue, reconsideration of clean-air standards, higher prices with hardly a murmur from the public, profits at all-time highs, and widespread talk of the need for federal subsidies to develop alternative energy sources at home. Their publicity campaigns indicate that they welcome public concern about the energy crisis—particularly while it focuses on such distant targets as Arab governments or worldwide patterns of demand for an exhaustible resource. The dupes of Act Three are those members of the American public who believe all they see or hear about "energy crisis" in the media, and particularly in the companies' own proliferating advertisements.

Act Four: The Arab "Oil Weapon" (1973)

THE SCENE once again is war, as Egypt and Syria attack Israel on Yom Kippur, October 6, 1973. The enormous losses of planes and tanks on both sides make it clear that American or Soviet willingness to resupply their protegés with weapons will be decisive. After some scurrying by Kissinger to Moscow and the Middle East and some pointed messages between Brezhnev and Nixon, which, in the latter's phrase, "leave little to the imagination," it is clear that Washington and Moscow concur on cessation rather than escalation of the conflict. The fighting ceases on the 17th day.

On the 12th day, Arab oil ministers meeting in Kuwait announce a two-pronged application of their "oil weapon": an outright ban on exports to the United States as Israel's major supplier of arms and to the Netherlands, and production cuts that start at 15 percent but will go up by 5 percent a month until Israel withdraws from the territories occupied in 1967 and 1973 and grants the "just rights" of Palestinian refugees.

Gone now are Fulbright's scenarios of Israelis marching along 800 miles of pipeline to make Arab oil safe for American consumption. Gone too are Nixon's hints about Mossadegh's comeuppance.

Despite the explanations offered by the twinkle-eyed Sheikh Yamani and other Arab ministers, the new Arab policy—unlike the messages exchanged by the nuclear powers

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—does leave a good deal to the imagination. Indeed, one finally imagines that this is part of their purpose. Meanwhile only imagination and inference can provide answers to questions such as these:

• *Why pick on the Netherlands?* The official reasons seem farfetched. Could the real reason be that a boycott of the Netherlands, whose refinery space far exceeds domestic consumption, hurts many European countries a little but none too much?

• *How fully do Arabs cooperate?* Not very fully, it soon becomes clear. Algeria stands aside. Qaddafi, smarting at not even having been told about the Yom Kippur War, is unenthusiastic. Iraq increases output on the charming reasoning that the boycott is too mild, that Iraq has been sending troops to the Syrian front and now must pay for the expedition by making more money off the capitalists. That leaves mostly the Arabian peninsula, or only two-thirds of total Arab production, as going fully along with the boycott.

• *What of the oil companies?* Officials of such companies as Aramco obviously cannot defy their hosts by producing too much or loading tankers bound for the wrong destination. But the multinational parent companies must somehow allocate their shrinking supplies among all their customers. They retain a good deal of discretion in supplying this or that American customer from Ecuador or Angola and in cutting back this or that customer in Europe and Japan in view of the emergency. While the multinationals retain control of the worldwide network of transport and refinery, it remains impossible for producing countries to pinpoint their boycotts precisely. Since five of the multinationals are American and the other two have large assets in the U.S., one may assume that their American customers will fare no worse than others.

• *What is the effect on industrial countries?* In the United States, the actual shortfall by mid-December is estimated to be no more than 3 or 4 percent of petroleum consumption, whereas the effects in Europe and especially Japan threaten to be far worse. The crucial fact remains that the United States, partly drained as it is, still is the world's largest oil producer and (aside from Soviet Russia) the most nearly self-sufficient consumer.

Conceivably, therefore, Americans might get by with curtailing their weekend pleasure-driving, forming carpools, reversing the decay of their railroads, and speeding the search for new domestic oil or nonoil substitutes. If Japan and Europe were caught in a massive recession and vast unemployment, moreover, American industry might even make large inroads into their export markets.

• *What of the financial effects?* Amid the general anxiety about fuel shortages, the petroleum-producing governments, also in mid-October, increase the "posted price" by a cool 70 percent. And on December 24 they increase it by an even cooler 128 percent. This time, the initiative comes from the Shah, although they all, including Yamani, the Shah, Qaddafi, and even Venezuelans, Indonesians, and Nigerians concur and are sure to cooperate. The posted price of December implies payments to Middle East producing governments of $7 a barrel, a combined Arab and Iranian oil income of $70 billion or more in 1974, and a world price of petroleum of nearly $8 a barrel f.o.b. Persian Gulf.

THE DAY AFTER the price increase, on Christmas day 1973, the Arab oil ministers make their last headline of the year by calling off their program of progressive cutbacks. Instead they promise to return to the 15 percent cuts of October and to confine their embargo only to the United States and the Netherlands.

Perhaps Sheikh Yamani and his friends are also using their imagination. The partially effective Arab embargo is having less of an impact in the United States than the oil industry's earlier advertisements, alarmist

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magazine articles, or the Nixon administration's first assessments might suggest. Specifically, in terms of any outcome at Geneva or along Israel's borders, the oil weapon is likely to prove blunt. United States opinion has been turning toward rather than away from Israel, and in any case the possibilities of American pressure on that embattled nation are limited. We can give to Israel the means of waging war or withhold them; we can even bring its representatives to the conference table; but we cannot impose on it terms of peace that it would consider disastrous. Therefore the outcome at Geneva, if any, is likely to be a tortuous compromise.

Above all—considering the comparative impact of the embargo on the United States, Western Europe, and Japan—the competitive position of American industry and of the dollar itself are likely to be strengthened, and the more so the longer the embargo lasts and the more the prices go up. No wonder that the Arab ministers decide to reverse signals while they are ahead—with Israel at the conference table, the U.S. in an even-handed posture in a non-election year, ahead very specifically by $25 billion or more in extra revenues for 1974, and ahead with their newly won stature as world statesmen unimpaired by overplaying their hand.

Whatever the particular Arab reasoning, others have reason to breathe a temporary sigh of relief as the curtain falls on Act Four.

Act Five: The $64 Billion Question

A FEW OPTIMISTS in Washington evidently were hoping that Henry Kissinger's opening address to the conference of oil-importing countries on February 11 would set the stage for the final act of the petroleum drama. Henry, after all, had built up an enviable diplomatic record by flying to Peking and Moscow to achieve normalcy with China and détente with Russia; to Paris and Hanoi to end the war in Vietnam; and to Moscow, Tel Aviv, and various Arab capitals to get the Arab-Israeli dispute off dead center. So much dramatic talent surely presaged a happy ending for the energy crisis. And this time Kissinger could for once abandon his jet-age diplomacy for the time-tested Metternich-Bismarck model of solving the world's problems by assembling all other statesmen back home at congresses in Vienna, Berlin, or Washington, as the case may be.

The optimists' scenario runs something like this: Canada, Western Europe, and Japan yield to Washington's pleas for a common energy policy and gratefully receive American offers of sharing technological know-how and even emergency supplies for the future. In particular, they listen to the warnings that bilateral deals between France and Saudi Arabia or Japan and Iran can only drive up prices further. Instead, they agree to multilateral diplomacy, e.g., between the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development representing the industrial nations and OPEC—or, better yet, its individual members—representing the producers.

Before taking up these global negotiations, the industrial countries also meet with the non-oil producers of the Third World for whom, as everyone agrees, the current prices may well spell economic ruin. Meanwhile, Iranians, Arabs, and others have taken to heart the competent arithmetic and plausible syllogisms of Energy Administrator William E. Simon, which prove inexorably that the current higher prices and lower production do not really benefit the OPEC countries, since a $10 per barrel profit today invested at 8 percent compound interest will yield $21.59 in 1984—a level to which even the tightest of cartels is unlikely to push prices by then. And of course, once the oil producers step up their production and begin to lower their prices there may even be some cutthroat competition driving prices yet lower.

Alas, the optimistic scenario is unlikely to provide the actual script for Act Five.

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Simon and other optimists are repeating the naive mistake (made by Western observers of Mossadegh's nationalization and Nasser's seizure of the Canal) of underrating the technical competence of the players across the table. Neither the Shah nor Sheikh Yamani are active candidates for the Nobel Prize in mathematics; still, they seem quite capable of compound-interest calculations and other exercises in fifth-grade arithmetic. Moreover, even the Washington optimists concede that "energy independence" for the United States will at best come in the 1980s, and for the rest of OECD much later, if ever. If and when the balance should shift, supply and demand (a pair of concepts so dear to American spokesmen on other occasions) will give ample warning that it is in the interest of oil-producing countries to lower their prices.

The solidarity to which Kissinger appealed was far from evident in the actions, or even the rhetoric, of other industrial countries. Instead there was a scramble by France, Japan, and others for the very bilateral deals Kissinger was denouncing. As for sharing oil supplies in an emergency, no one except the United States had offered help to the Netherlands last fall; and even if there should be any future willingness to share, there might be very little to be shared. Officials of the Common Market for years had been urging member countries to store 90 days' or even 120 days' worth of petroleum—yet when the crisis came last October there were actual supplies for around 60 days. The grim fact remained that, solidarity or selfishness aside, the collective situation of oil-consuming countries would never be symmetrical with that of the oil producers—for the simple reason that the storage of oil profits is very lucrative and the storage of oil very costly. Perhaps a program such as Kissinger announced in February might have been timely in 1968 or 1969—when few people were alive to the problem. Even Walter J. Levy, one of the earliest champions of what for the moment is Washington policy, concedes that "the time for action was yesterday"—without considering that today and tomorrow may be times for a somewhat different kind of action.

Kissinger himself glossed over a detail that was sure to become crucial. "The United States declares its willingness," he solemnly intoned, "to share available energy in times of emergency or prolonged shortage. We would be prepared to allocate an agreed portion of our petroleum supply provided other consuming countries with indigenous production do likewise." The shift from "available *energy*" in one sentence to "*petroleum* supply" in the next seems disingenuous, and the reference to other indigenous producers (Canada, Norway, and in a few years Britain) leaves a convenient alibi. But assume that the ambiguity were resolved and the escape hatch closed: will the American public, after spending billions of dollars on autarchy, really allow itself to be cajoled into exporting the tangible results of such hard-won "energy independence"? And if not, can we expect Europe or Japan to believe in our sincerity?

The failure of Kissinger's petroleum scenario leaves unanswered some fundamental questions about the future of the world economy. Will the oil-producing countries succeed in their ambitious attempt to revolutionize the distribution of real assets in the world's economy? Will OPEC continue to show more solidarity than OECD? How soon will the present oil shortage turn into a glut, as a result of such trends as energy conservation in the industrial countries, increased production in Iraq, Indonesia, and Ecuador, new supplies from the South China Sea, and synthetic production from shale or coal? When the turning point comes, will prices revert to their pre-1973 or pre-1969 stability or will they fluctuate as wildly as those of some other commodities and, for that matter, of "spot charters" for oil tankers?

How large will be the income of the oil-producing countries—estimated by some to

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be running as high as $70 billion for 1974—and how much of it will they manage to spend on development? How much of the remainder will they spend on local arms races between Saudi Arabia and Iran, or (as mostly heretofore) on short-term investments in the Eurodollar market? Will there be adequate "recycling" of these oil incomes from the Middle East via Beirut, Zurich, or London, back to Frankfurt, New York, or Tokyo so as to finance the bloated foreign-exchange bills of the importing countries? Or will curtailed industrial growth and recurrent devaluation lead to Kissinger's nightmare of "a vicious cycle of competition, autarchy, rivalry, and depression such as led to the collapse of world order in the thirties"?

The future international role of the oil companies also poses some perplexing questions. Having lost their hold on production upstream, will they be able to retain control of the midstream operations of transportation and processing? Or will OPEC countries spend enough money on supertankers and refineries to challenge them in that arena as well and gradually reduce them to a role of mere distributors and retailers? In view of the ample precedents for nationalization throughout the Third World, will the oil multinationals continue to engage in the costly process of worldwide exploration, particularly on the continental shelves? Will even their downstream functions come under attack, as producing countries seek to barter higher production or safety of supply against entry of their national oil companies into the refinery, filling station, and heating oil businesses in the United States and elsewhere—a scenario fully sketched by Yamani as early as 1972?

The oil companies themselves seem to be taking no chances on continuing their accustomed international role. Ever since Act Three of the petroleum drama, as we saw, they have begun to shift their attention to the domestic American scene. For the oil companies themselves the much-heralded energy crisis was quite simply a crisis of imminent expropriation upstream and hence a need to recoup themselves downstream. And while you are shifting attention and trying to recoup, why not recoup yourself more than fully? The United States, after all, remains the leading petroleum producer, and shale oil and liquefied coal can only enhance that stature. It remains the world's largest market for petroleum. And its public rhetoric of free enterprise remains just about the best available guarantee against nationalization or even effective regulation of corporate giants.

THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION of the last few months indicates that a crucial scene of Act Five will indeed be acted out right here in the United States. The tone of that discussion, to be sure, has become quite hostile to the oil companies as motorists have queued for gasoline, truckers threatened to strike, homeowners faced mounting fuel bills, and public prosecutors looked into petty price gouging, tanker queues, and petroleum supplies withheld in customs bond. Yet from such expressions of public anger to effective control was a long step.

Just how long a step it might be was illustrated by President Nixon's own program for controlling oil-company profits. As announced last December, one of its most immediate features was to be a cancellation of the depletion allowances on the oil companies' foreign operations. He forgot to mention that, in view of the companies' enormous tax credits on payments to foreign governments, few if any of them ever claim any foreign depletion allowances to start with.

The focus of the American discussion will for some time be on the problem of imports vs. domestic production. Measures of energy conservation of a comparatively painless sort can banish the specter of energy blackmail from our foreign policy for years ahead. But our growing economy requires the rapid development of domestic non-

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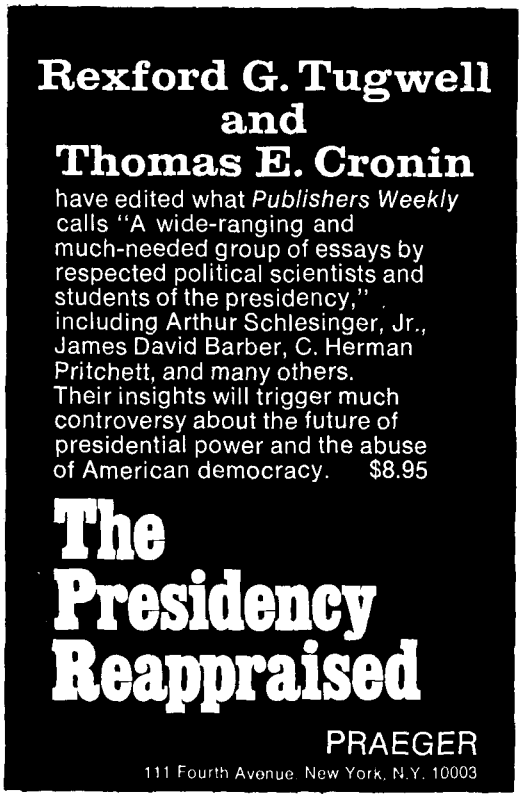
petroleum sources of energy—such as coal gasification or liquefaction, oil retorted from shale, atomic power, solar energy, and others. And the exponential rise in world petroleum prices, with its possible disastrous effects on our balance of payments, makes this development of alternative fuels not only imperative but also economic. With oil selling at $8 or $10 a barrel or more, many substitutes will seem attractive that were prohibitive when oil was only $2 or $3 a barrel.

On the need for a major program for "energy independence," therefore, there can be little quarrel between the oil companies and their critics. The key questions are the conditions under which the program is to be pursued and how it is to be financed. Will thoughtless strip-mining be allowed to turn hundreds of square miles of our country into a permanent moonscape? Or will we require the companies (including large oil companies) who own the coalfields to restore topsoil and vegetation as they go along? If large-scale production of shale oil proves feasible, will the public lands that contain most of the shale be kept public or sold at cutrate? Above all, will the federal government assume the full cost of developing alternatives to petroleum and hand their operation over to industry once high profits become certain? Or will the oil companies, perhaps with suitable exemptions from antitrust regulations, be induced to bear the cost of research and development themselves?

Corporations owe their prime allegiance to stockholders, that is, to profits. There is nothing immoral or outlandish, therefore, about oil companies seeking tax credits, depletion allowances, protectionist quotas, exemptions from ecological regulations, or huge government subsidies for the development of new products. Indeed, such are the standard operating procedures in a mixed public-private economy in which the oil companies have long been among the biggest operators. But it is up to the public—that is to Congress, president, and electorate—to decide which if any of these demands are to be granted.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The American taxpayer two decades ago made his debut as the dupe of Act One of the drama of international petroleum politics. In Act Two that role was taken over by the American consumer, and in Act Three by the newspaper-reading and television-viewing public. In Act Five, will the American taxpayer be trapped once again in his time-honored and generous role? That, all too literally, will be the $64 billion question of 1974 and beyond. □

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Joseph Epstein

The First Twenty Years

Seeking a review of our twenty years of existence that would be neither encomium nor assault, but instead a considered and critical judgment, the editors of Dissent *invited the writer Joseph Epstein to put down his opinions about and reactions to the magazine. Mr. Epstein, who in this piece describes himself as "a liberal nonsocialist," agreed to write the article. Here, exactly as he has submitted it, is his assessment. Let the chips fall, debate continue, freedom ring—and* Dissent *survive!*—ED.

A magazine is the ideal possession, possibly the supreme toy, of the intellectual. It might serve as the acid test to determine whether a person is an intellectual or not to ask if he ever wished to own or edit a magazine. He who answers no, whatever else he may be, including an artist, statesman, scientist, or genius, is most probably no intellectual. "Didacticism is the mainspring of prose," Osip Mandelstam wrote, "and therefore a prose writer needs a rostrum." In the modern era, in most places at most times, that rostrum has been a magazine. A magazine may be all the power an intellectual needs, or, for his own good, should ever be allowed.

Princesses and their jewels, beggars and their rags, intellectuals and their magazines —in each instance it is hard to imagine the one without the other. Magazines, or journals, provide the chief context in which an intellectual functions; they are the field upon which he battles, the sky in which (with talent) he shines, the source of much of his mental oxygen. In countries without an intellectual capital, magazines serve as *in absentia* coffee houses or salons, offering, along with a forum for ideas, information, and polemic, a form of intellectual sociability whereby intellectuals learn how each other's minds work. In some situations, a magazine can be a voice in the wilderness. In Russia under Nicholas I, Alexander Herzen, editing two different Russian-language journals in exile in London, referred to the first of them, the *Pole Star,* as "my printed monologue." What Herzen could not know was that his journal was circulated secretly, being passed hand-to-hand, a 19th-century precursor of the *samizdat* methods being employed in the Soviet Union today.

The motives for editing an intellectual journal—as opposed to an exclusively literary or a general-interest journal—are as various as the functions such a journal can perform. Perhaps only (and for once safely) the profit motive can be eliminated, for anyone who begins a serious intellectual journal with the idea of raking in large profits deserves to be disqualified—and not on moral but on strictly intellectual grounds. In "Why I Write" Orwell offered four motives for his own writing, which likely apply as well to the question, if one can imagine the editor of a serious intellectual magazine writing such an essay, "Why I Edit." Orwell's four motives were : (1) ego, (2) aesthetic pleasure, (3) historical impulse, or the desire "to see

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things as they are, to find out true facts and store them up for the use of posterity," and (4) to alter the direction of the world. For himself, Orwell said that the first three outweighed the fourth motive. For most editors, perhaps the third and fourth motives would outweigh the first two, though, as with Orwell's writing, doubtless all four would come into play.

But do intellectual magazines with their puny circulation figures truly alter the direction of the world? Indisputably. The question isn't any longer even open to argument. Herzen's journal the *Bell* is frequently credited with being as influential as any other element in the decision to free the serfs. In more recent times in Russia, the consequences of Alexander Tvardovsky's determination to print Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in The Life of Ivan Denisovitch* in *Novy Mir* may eventually be more significant to Soviet society than the 20th Party Congress or the New Economic Program. On a less dramatic level, the effect on nearly an entire generation of a now mature professoriat that grew up on the diet of modernism in literature and radicalism in politics served up by *Partisan Review* is incalculable but clearly considerable. More recently and closer to power, it had been bruited about that the Nixon administration read the journal the *Public Interest* with the greatest scrupulosity, thinking, before its attention was drawn elsewhere, to take its catechism in domestic policy in those pages. Even the Central Intelligence Agency testified to the belief in the efficacy of intellectual magazines, if not to its own efficiency as a *sub rosa* organization, when a few years back it was caught slipping cash into the tills of various journals of modest circulation but wide influence both in America and abroad.

In the United States the past ten or so years have not on the whole been high or happy ones for intellectual journalism. False starts and sad slides have tended to predominate. Of sad slides perhaps none has been sadder or more steeply downhill than that undertaken by the once-towering *Partisan Review*. Formerly the most stirring of the American intellectual magazines, during this period it lost its bearings (and with them its standards), hit the skids, and went bounding off in hot pursuit of youth both in its politics and its literary tastes. The *New York Review of Books,* begun roughly ten years ago, started off in a great blaze, having the very best names among its stable of writers and traveling under the colors of a radicalism it helped make chic. Soon the magazine was running pieces approving of riots, urging draft resistance, and writing off Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for an insufficiency of radical vision—all of which was made possible, if not palatable, because it appeared alongside the magazine's strong cachet of contributors of cultural criticism. But with the Vietnam War now over, with Edmund Wilson, Igor Stravinsky, and W. H. Auden (who together comprised the cachet) now dead, the *New York Review* is a journal very much stalled. Predictable in its political pieces, no longer stellar in its cultural coverage, the journal, so promising in its beginning, in many of its recent issues seems chiefly comprised of the work of mad dogs and Englishmen.

Elsewhere the scene scarcely appears brighter. The late Philip Rahv attempted to reincarnate the old *Partisan Review,* of which he had been a principal editor, in *Modern Occasions.* A decisive and useful literary critic, in politics Rahv was a radical trimmer, and his new magazine, after a brief life, expired, a casualty to foggy political purpose. *May Day,* later retitled *Hard Times,* the journal begun by James Ridgeway and Andrew Kopkind, who had worked as associate editors of the *New Republic,* came to life and quickly folded, its editors becoming regular contributors to *Ramparts,* the house organ of left-wing paranoia. The *Public Interest* was begun by Daniel Bell and Irving Kristol, both old hands at intellectual journalism and at ideological warfare. Aside from its politics, if any journalistic criticism might be made of the *Public Interest* it is

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that its content as often as not does not seem in the general intellectual interest. It seems, that is, a journal edited less for intellectual debate than for exerting political influence, which may account for why so many of its pieces over the years read like memos addressed to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare or Housing and Urban Development. Under its new editor, Norman Podhoretz, *Commentary* came near to traveling full-circle during this period. Podhoretz began by veering his magazine off its former Cold War course, took it sharply leftward —going so far as to run H. Stuart Hughes on unilateral disarmament—then turned abruptly back in revulsion against the New Left. While never quite joining the American Celebration, neither has *Commentary* found much in recent years, apart from the excesses of the Left, to criticize in American life.

These years were scarcely any easier on *Dissent*. In many ways they may have been more difficult. Consider the magazine's predicament. In the main it was how to remain Left without deserting first principles. Keeping in mind the period we have just come through, merely to name these principles—an adherence to democratic methods, an opposition to violence as a means to political ends, and a commitment to reasoned discourse—is to highlight the nature of the predicament. Given the penchant for high-blown rhetoric, the heedlessness about destruction, and the casual unconcern about democratic values becoming increasingly endemic on the Left toward the end of the 1960s, the question for *Dissent* was how to remain radical, hew to principle, and not in the process become, in C. Wright Mill's acid phrase, "futilitarians of the Left." At best, the magazine figured to fall out of fashion; at worst, out of existence.

The ironies here were manifold. Less than two decades before, in the Winter of 1954, *Dissent* had come into being, born because its founding editors felt the current atmosphere one of intellectual stagnation and extreme political timidity. "This Age of Conformity," Irving Howe was to style the time, in a phrase that would later become a cliché. Viewing the same period, C. Wright Mills, in the gruff prose style characteristic of his writing in the 1950s, saw on the one hand "a decayed and frightened liberalism" and on the other "the insecure and ruthless fury of political gangsters." Joseph R. McCarthy was still on the loose. Yet in 1952 in a *Partisan Review* symposium, it was declared that American prosperity "has at long last effected the absorption of the intellectuals into the intellectual life of the country." American intellectuals were said to be "reconciled" to their country. Chastened by the revelations about Stalinism, one of the editors of *Partisan Review* noted, "American democracy looks like the real thing to the intellectuals." Now that intellectuals could be said to be with the show, embourgeoised by the nation's prosperity, "the idea of socialism, whether in its revolutionary or democratic reference, has virtually ceased to figure in current intellectual debate." With his customary broad brushstrokes, C. Wright Mills painted in the picture: among political intellectuals, he wrote, "there is no demand and no dissent, and no opposition to the monstrous decisions that are being made without deep or widespread debate, in fact with no debate at all."

Onto the scene entered *Dissent*—a new and argumentative voice. By now it is almost a tradition in intellectual journalism that the smaller the magazine the larger its claims, the less its resources the more boisterous its tone. Within this tradition, *Dissent*'s opening salvo, "A Word to Our Readers," was reasonably modest and carefully measured:

> The purpose of this new magazine is suggested by its name: to dissent from the bleak atmosphere of conformism that pervades the political and intellectual life of the United States; to dissent from the support of the *status quo* now so noticeable on the

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part of many former radicals and socialists; to dissent from the terrible assumption that a new war is necessary or inevitable, and that the only way to defeat Stalinism is through atomic world suicide.

The magazine did not view itself operating outside the realm of ideas, though ideas, as its founding editors well knew, had interesting ways of slipping off the page and out into the world. Yet the editors specifically declared no interest in forming a political party or group. Socialism was for many among them the name of their dream; still, they saw no hope of revitalizing the Socialist Party of America, nor did they expect an extraordinary rise in interest in socialism in the United States in the near future. As a group, then, the founders of *Dissent* were independent radicals—"a collectivity of individualists," as one of them later labeled the group—who shared common values and a common outlook, if not necessarily a commonality of specific political doctrine. The values were those of the Left and the outlook critical of the *status quo*. Stalinists and totalitarian fellow-travelers were to be excluded from the magazine's pages as were former radicals "who have signed their peace with society as it is." Apart from these people, the editors welcomed "any expression of lively and competent thought, or scholarly contributions touching upon our area of interest, even if these dissent from *Dissent*." As for immediate goals and promises, the editors ended with the claim that they had raised sufficient funds to honor the one-year subscriptions they were soliciting.

No actuarial studies have even been done on the longevity of intellectual magazines, which is probably a good thing, for if such a study were done and made available, perhaps no other intellectual magazine would ever again be begun. Even among bad investments, it is a disaster. For most intellectual magazines that are not privately funded or institutionally sponsored, a good year is one in which, after considerable finagling and begging, one has to send out only one general fund-raising letter. At its inception, certainly, there was no persuasive reason to assume that *Dissent* would be around for long. The magazine's editors were all part-time, it had no office, its contributors were unpaid, and from the standpoint of design it was very far from eye-catching—fit more for the kitchen than for the coffee table. But all this is to overlook the main explanation for *Dissent*'s survival, which was that it had a genuine reason for being and was, moreover, born at a period (which it would help usher in) rich in radical writing.

How rich a vein of radical writing one need only skim through the early years' issues of *Dissent* to discover. There one finds the radical impulse running in two broad streams —one European, the other American. From Europe the magazine ran, among others, Ignazio Silone, Czeslaw Milosz, Nicola Chiaromonte, Leszek Kolakowski, George Lichtheim, and Herbert Marcuse—men who had seen at first-hand, and often been directly victimized by, the tumultous events of recent history. From its American stream came a battery of writers trained for the most part in the New York playgrounds of sectarian Left politics—men with switch-blade minds ready, when it came to political argument, to slash out for the jugular. From Texas came C. Wright Mills, from Brooklyn Norman Mailer, from St. Louis and the Catholic Worker movement came Michael Harrington, who, a bit younger than most of the men who founded *Dissent*, later confessed that his first reaction to the magazine was that in forming it its editors were "selling out." Among older men, A. J. Muste and Norman Thomas contributed occasional pieces, and both lent their names to the masthead. In retrospect, taken together, it seems a formidable array of intellectual and political talent.

In retrospect, the 1950s were rather a fine time for intellectual journalism generally. *Partisan Review* was still going strong, no

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issue of *Commentary* was devoid of interest, toward the close of the decade Irving Kristol founded *Encounter* in London, and much work of distinction appeared in the now defunct *Reporter*. The reasons behind this flourishing state of intellectual journalism are not easily fathomed. In part, much of it has to do with the generation now in its fifties and sixties, who was then in its thirties and forties. The New York Intellectuals is the convenient catch-phrase for them, these men brought up in the ideological wars of the 1930s, who, for reasons that are themselves puzzling, have always been better in their essays than in their books. Whatever their shortcomings or limitations, it must be said that one does not see them being replaced with anything approaching the same quality by writers of a younger generation.

In *Dissent* during these years one could rely upon finding small and large gems quarterly: Norman Mailer on David Riesman, C. Wright Mills on "Knowledge and Power," Irving Howe and Lewis Coser (singly or sometimes in collaboration) on a subject of polemical interest, Silone on "The Choice of Comrades," Chiaromonte on mass society, Paul Goodman on segregation. The Autumn 1955 issue, for example, had pieces by Michael Harrington, G. L. Arnold (as George Lichtheim then signed himself), Harold Rosenberg, Irving Howe, Erich Fromm, Richard Hofstadter, Gabriel Kolko, Harvey Swados, A. J. Muste, and George Woodcock.

In *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, Richard Hofstadter remarked upon the component of playfulness in the makeup of intellectuals. Intellectual playfulness, sometimes rough and sometimes comical, was not in short supply in *Dissent*'s first years. An early piece, a commentary on a piece by Sidney Hook on an imagined visit to Karl Marx, suggested that if Marx came around on the subject of social value, "Hook may go so far as to propose him for membership in the American Committee for Cultural Freedom." In another piece, Irving Howe slipped into a parody of Henry Adams to register disgust at the heavy-handedly anti-libertarian legislation against the American Communist party ("One word kept coursing through his mind and rubbing against his nerves, bringing fever to his fingertips. The word was, *shame!*"). And in the magazine's correspondence columns, one of the zaniest bits of polemic—brilliant and witty and as intensely personal as any that has perhaps been printed anywhere—appeared, a marvelous three-cornered affair between Paul Goodman (who in a review accused Dwight Macdonald of being "our best journalist"), Macdonald (who came back to recall, among other things, that Goodman had once told him he could demonstrate the quality of poems scientifically—a method that served to prove that his, Goodman's, poems were excellent), and Harold Rosenberg (who, attacked by Macdonald as being pontifical—"Harold XII" was the sobriquet employed—rejoined by remarking that he would gladly straighten Macdonald out, "though what good it would do to convince a man who has been convinced and unconvinced so often I don't know"). Ripping, slashing stuff—amusing intellectual high jinks.

Polemic, not usually so personal but always political, has been at the heart of *Dissent* as an intellectual enterprise. Sometimes coming out slugging, other times counterpunching, from the magazine's earliest to its most recent days, its stance has been an embattled one. Cold War intellectuals not noted for their calm could be driven to hysteria by *Dissent*. Diana Trilling, in 1956 accused *Dissent*, "whose polemic is based not upon intellectual cogency but upon emotional intimidation of its readers," of creating "more anxiety in the liberal community than our continuing efforts at liberal reason can allay." If for Diana Trilling *Dissent* was insufficiently terrified of the threat the Soviet Union posed to American freedom and altogether too negative about the virtues of American society, others came at the magazine from different directions. For some it was nowhere near radical enough, too often

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seeming politically amorphous and on too many large issues being without a clear line; others considered the magazine too academic, a literary venture in a world calling out for political activity; and still others thought it old-hat, the stuff of the 1930s, giving off too strong a whiff of the sectarian Left life of the Depression in New York. If political journalism does not figure to bring in large profits, neither is it likely to win large and unanimous acclaim.

Acclaim is one thing, readership another, and in time *Dissent* built up a steady, if less than teeming, circulation. For many of its regular readers *Dissent* became their magazine—the magazine that, better than any other, expressed their values, discontents, and social vision. Over these same years the magazine also built up a corps of regular contributors, whose spread in age has extended from veterans of the Austrian Socialist party to undergraduates at Yale. Apart from its bread-and-butter contributors, *Dissent* has also served as a home to the stray dissenting essay that could not find a home elsewhere. In its first decade of existence, to cite two examples, it ran an essay entitled "America! America!" by Dwight Macdonald that had originally been commissioned and rejected by *Encounter* and another entitled "Reflections on Little Rock" by Hannah Arendt that was, in Miss Arendt's words, written upon the suggestion of *Commentary* but was "at variance with the magazine's stand on matters of discrimination and segregation." The chief of Hannah Arendt's points was that, strategically, education was the wrong area in which to concentrate efforts toward desegregation in the South, and though hers was a position also strongly at variance with the views of most of *Dissent*'s editors—the piece engendered a lively correspondence—the magazine ran it nevertheless.

Dissent served as well as a conduit of sorts for important writing from Eastern Europe. It was first among American journals onto the work of the Polish writer Kolakowski. The publication in the West of *Dr. Zhivago* received perhaps a more intelligent hearing in *Dissent*'s pages than anywhere else—a dialogue between Nicola Chiaromonte and Lionel Abel, which attempted to come to a balanced assessment on the standing of that remarkable book as an act of human courage and a work of literary art. The magazine published the first English translation of "On Socialist Realism" by Abram Tertz, the pen name as is now known of Andrei Sinyavsky. Milovan Djilas, too, was a figure whose cause and case came up more than once over the years. Whether as a set policy among its editors, or as something less than that, the effect of *Dissent*'s attention to the work and situation of the radicals of Eastern Europe—where radicalism carries a much higher price tag than any American radical of our day has ever been required to pay—is that of an act of solidarity.

Solidarity across oceans is perhaps easier than at close quarters. How fragile it can be among political intellectuals! Flipping through the 19 bound volumes of *Dissent* from the perspective of today, one is regularly brought up sharp at the contributors whose names one comes across and at the defections, to the Left and to the Right both, that the tumultuous events of the past two decades have encouraged. Some former contributors have gone the way of national self-hatred that goes by the unsatisfactory name of anti-Americanism; some others have joined the caravan of American politics, serving in the age-old capacity of the intellectual whose task it is to justify power. In the early 1960s, for example, both Staughton Lynd and John P. Roche were welcome to, and evidently felt comfortable in, *Dissent*'s pages, whereas today, so far afield have the two men journeyed politically in their different directions since that time, the appearance of either in the magazine seems indeed very far from likely.

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Defections to death have taken a more serious toll. Since *Dissent*'s inception, Norman Thomas and A. J. Muste, the two elder statesmen of that particular strand of the radical Left that the magazine saw (and continues to see) itself representing, have died, and passed from the scene without anything resembling replacements yet arising. Closer to the issue-by-issue life of the magazine, among contributing editors and major contributors, C. Wright Mills, Richard Wright, Harvey Swados, Paul Goodman, Ben B. Seligman, and Nicola Chiaromonte are all dead. Each made special contributions to the magazine, but in its early years Mills especially lent *Dissent*'s pages the broad-ax of his intellectual boldness. Swados, though less flashy intellectually, brought a seriousness of social concern with his writing for the magazine. Goodman's contribution was that of radical ingenuity; where others had visions, he insisted upon, and brought along, blueprints. A truly international intellectual, a piece by Nicola Chiaromonte was, dependably, a work of great historical sophistication. Ben Seligman was that rarity: an economist unashamed of possessing a social conscience. Richard Wright was already an established writer before he became associated with *Dissent*—the Pushkin of American Negro literature, the figure with whom it all began—and his impact on the magazine as a contributing editor was not notable; yet it is interesting to speculate upon what Wright might have contributed once the civil rights movement of the sixties got underway in earnest, had he not died at a premature fifty-two in 1960.

After defections and deaths, there are dropouts to consider. These include not writers who have gone elsewhere but those who for one reason or another have fallen silent. What, for instance, has become of Daniel M. Friedenberg, once a contributing editor, who wrote well on Cuba, Africa, and on New York? Or of Ned Polsky, a highly unacademic sociologist, who contributed memorable reports on the culture of hipsters and hustlers? Or of Lionel Abel, also long a contributing editor, who wrote a good deal for the magazine on political and cultural matters?

Although he may never before have been regarded as a dropout, and although he can scarcely be said to have fallen silent, Norman Mailer, who remains on the *Dissent* masthead as a member of its editorial board, hasn't written for the magazine for almost eight years. Mailer wrote what is surely the most widely discussed single piece ever to appear in *Dissent*. "The White Negro" is the piece in question, a composition of key importance in Mailer's development and, it does not seem preposterous to suggest, one that may have had a shaping responsibility for some of the more mindless activism of the sixties—a time when the word "existential" covered actions more accurately described as irrational or antisocial. As pure journalism, "The White Negro" was champagne; as ethics, it was purest swill. Only much later, well into the '60s, did Irving Howe, in a footnote to his essay "The New York Intellectuals" (in *Commentary*, October 1968), rightly renounce the piece, saying that when he "first received the manuscript . . . he should have expressed in print his objections to the passage in which Mailer discusses the morality of beating up a fifty-year-old storekeeper. That he could not bring himself to risk losing a scoop is no excuse whatever."

The example, though, is instructive. One of the lessons the past decade taught was that one could not have it both ways: one could not, that is, be both with-it and honorable at the same time. One either rode with the hurricane or attempted to face it down.

To face down the hurricane, not to be swept up by the swirl of hip and hot ideas of the moment, carries its cost. Part of the price is a certain loneliness. In a recent interview with Günter Grass, Irving Howe remarked

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that "people of our politics are in trouble," the trouble being their inability to satisfy the hunger of youth, perhaps religious in its emotional content, that in recent years has diverted itself into politics. That seems true enough. Not at the moment, nor possibly ever in its two decades, has *Dissent* been attractive to young people in large numbers.

How explain this? Has the magazine simply been out of it, missing the main issues or coming down wrongly on the important ones among them? Has it been marching not merely to a different drummer but instead doing a parochial polka to an accordion player that only it can hear? This seems unlikely, for *Dissent* has been on target at least as much as other journals; and sometimes at least as diverted by subjects or issues that turned out to be of only passing interest. (To revert back to dropouts, does anyone recall such subjects of journalistically unsustainable interest as automation, decentralization, and land reform in Latin America, if not all of Latin America itself?) Can there be something repellent to youth in the thinking that goes into *Dissent?* Are the magazine's editors cursed with the hex of perpetual middle-age? Or is the entire question of capturing the interest of a youthful following a foolish one—a question of a kind that would only be asked in a country preternaturally concerned about the young?

In any intellectual journal other than one edited by socialist intellectuals the question might indeed be a foolish one. Youth has been wrong much more often than it has been right, and to have youth on one's side can be construed less as a sign of distinction than as a need for self-examination. Intellectuals can rightly tell youth to go play in the sandbox. But can socialists? Socialist-intellectuals: does that hyphen house any contradictions, tensions, conflicts? The men who founded *Dissent* were unable to believe in the early revival of the socialist movement in America; the magazine was, for them, at least in part in the way of a substitute for that movement, a voice of socialist values. It has now been dropped, but for the longer part of its life *Dissent* was subtitled "A Quarterly of Socialist Opinion," and socialism has in fact been more than an appendage to the magazine. While one need not be a socialist to write for or take pleasure in reading *Dissent,* socialism nonetheless gives the magazine its particular quality and is inextricably bound up with its weaknesses as well as with its strengths.

A liberal, nonsocialist intellectual attempting to understand a socialist is a bit in the position of a secularized or agnostic Jew attempting to understand an Orthodox Jew. The difference between them, one has to conclude, is a matter of faith. There is even a hint of potential condescension in the relationship, the liberal looking upon the socialist—as the agnostic might upon the Orthodox Jew—as if to say, Well, if it gives comfort, this faith, what's the harm? *Dissent*'s editors themselves, while insisting on their socialism, have tended to wear it lightly. Their approach to socialism, they have always claimed, is not as to a fixed piety and their concentration has been on the "problematics" of the subject. In the Howe and Coser essay "Images of Socialism," socialism was viewed not as the "pursuit of happiness but the enlargement of freedom." Ten years ago, on the occasion in fact of *Dissent*'s tenth anniversary, Irving Howe, toting up credits of accomplishment and debits of disappointment, noted on the debit side: "We have not, to be sure, reconstructed that new synthesis of socialist thought which we had fondly, indeed naively, hoped to reach." Ten years later, it is doubtful that any among *Dissent*'s editors will have claimed to have done so since.

For those among *Dissent*'s editors for whom socialism, both as a problem and as a goal, remains central, it remains so largely as an ideal. Fraternity, equality of means and opportunity, a hatred of injustice, these are the major elements of a socialism which itself functions as a vision of the good society—if not a perfect one, at least a better

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one than we now have. As such, socialism remains an aspiration. Its value as an inspirational source may be great; its value as an intellectual weapon, apart from Marxism, appears less clear. There is, as Lewis Coser points out in his Foreword to *A Dissenter's Guide to Foreign Policy,* no "Left tradition in foreign policy." Nor, one might add, are there any stellar examples of socialism at work in the world today. Twisted into grotesque contortions in the Soviet Union and China, found workable but uninspiring in the Scandinavian countries, insufficient to offset the thumping disadvantages of intellectual resource in the Third World, and generally rejected in the nations of Western Europe and the Americas, socialism as an active program is obviously onto lean days. "It's colder than socialism here in New York," E. E. Cummings once wrote in a letter to a friend, and anyone who is not a committed socialist can instantly recognize and smile at the joke.

Certainly, no one connected with *Dissent* would wish to claim that the magazine has helped revive socialism in America. What the magazine can claim, however, is that it has helped keep the idea—the ideal, the aspiration—of socialism alive as a human possibility. It has not solved the crisis of socialism, which is of a larger order than a quarterly journal is likely to be able to deal with. Nicola Chiaromonte, on the subject of the crisis of socialism, wisely wrote that "confidence in socialism implies confidence in a more general principle"—that principle being, to put it roughly, a belief in progress. Stalin, Hitler, and other catastrophes of the current century may have succeeded in pricing a belief in progress out of reach in our day.

While the situation of socialism in the world at the moment may be a point of grievous dismay to *Dissent's* socialist editors, it may also be good for the intellectual health of the magazine. Too certain a commitment or too sure a view of socialism might edge the magazine over into dogmatism, and divert it from intellectual main purposes—the main purposes, or core, of the intellectual, as Richard Hofstadter once put it, being "the search for new certainties," which implies a dissatisfaction with the old ones. It was also Hofstadter who remarked upon the danger of the obeisance of intellectuals to a single idea:

> If there is anything more dangerous to the life of the mind than having no independent commitment to ideas, it is having an excess of commitment to some special and constricting idea. The effect is as observable in politics as in theology: the intellectual function can be overwhelmed by an excess of piety expended within too contracted a frame of reference

As it stands, there is a tension in *Dissent* between its socialism and its intellectuality. The socialism wants youth on its side, the intellectuality refuses to pay the price in forgoing principles involved in proselytizing. The socialist side ardently wishes a revival of radicalism, the intellectual side mounts a furious artillery attack on the New Left. "A New Political Atmosphere in America?" the socialist side asks optimistically, but in time the intellectual side will find it heavily polluted. And so it goes: the socialist is blown up with hope, the intellectual wields a puncturing pin.

But is the tension between the two, frequently found in the same writer, finally creative or dampening? The question leads directly into another question: How good, how successful, has *Dissent* been? Henry Luce thought to comfort himself and his employees at Time-Life, Inc., by remarking to the assembled faithful: "All our publications, all our activities, are successful. They are successful not only at the box office, but they are successful also in the opinion of a large part of mankind. This is a considerable consolation for our efforts over the years." By such standards *Dissent* not merely fails but scarcely exists. "Our finances are a trifle

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better than in the past," the editor once reported to the magazine's readers, "they are merely critical."

If success at the box office is to be discounted, what of correctness of opinion? How has *Dissent* scored here? Remarkably well, as it turns out. Once underway, the magazine proved mainly on target on the chief issues and events of its time. It was, for example, correct in continuing to stress the extent and depth of poverty in America when everyone else seemed to be taken up with the subject of affluence. It was correct in citing the shallowness of the Kennedy administration while it was still in business. It was correct on civil rights, deploring separatism, and maintaining the argument, enunciated in its pages by Bayard Rustin, that federal help on a large scale was needed for the Negro but not the Negro alone. It was correct—and early in the day: see "Last Chance in Vietnam," Summer 1964—on Vietnam. It was correct in excoriating the self-indulgences and irresponsibilities of the New Left (which, in retrospect, seems to have been comprised exclusively of self-indulgences and irresponsibilities).

One can find issues where the case for correctness either doesn't exist or is a good deal less clear. Irving Howe was once badly burned by Ralph Ellison for a piece in *Dissent* insisting that protest be the main strain in contemporary fiction by American Negro writers. Is the magazine a latecomer to women's rights, and is it correct even now? Taken together, will its recent attacks on the new conservative intellectuals hold up? Someone keeping a more careful scorecard over the years could doubtless find many places where the magazine was off target, or unclear, or failed in persepctive, thoroughness, or style. But in the main, over the first two decades of its existence *Dissent*—deriving its principles from a hatred of exploitation and a hunger for justice—said No, and in the main the magazine appears to have been right to have done so.

Yet what does it gain a man, or a magazine, to be correct if the world comes tumbling down around him? Has *Dissent* changed the world in which it exists in any way? Would things look any different if the magazine had never come into being? These are brutal questions—one has only to apply them to oneself to discover how brutal—yet questions that admit of no easy answers. Does it seem fair to say that by its early opposition to the Cold War, while itself remaining anti-totalitarian, *Dissent* helped over the long haul to tone down and thence eventually change the temper of East-West relations? Can one make a case for the magazine's providing a platform for some of the most intelligent discussion of civil rights goals and strategies, and thus, by extension, having contributed to the eventual passage of significant civil rights legislation? Or what of the unarguable fact that one of *Dissent*'s editors and major contributors, Michael Harrington, produced a book, *The Other America,* which, along with much supporting material in *Dissent* and other left-liberal journals, is acknowledged to have been a key factor in initiating the Antipoverty Program?

One can believe all these things and more besides, yet when pressed it is also difficult to dispute that Russian wheat deals, a man named Bull Connor, and a president from Texas with a huge ego and an eye on history didn't count for more in the three areas mentioned above than all the intellectuals in the nation. Intellectuals who edit and write for magazines that reach small audiences seem to heed the solace—or is it self-justification—that their efforts "count" in the world. Very often they do count—sometimes indirectly, sometimes reverberating over a long stretch of years—in the great world, yet no intellectual magazine could survive for any length of time if it had to justify its existence by what it had done in any given year to alter the shape of the world.

The world may have its uses for intellectual magazines, but the chief justification for these magazines is not what the world makes of them but the quality of thought that goes

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into them. Though not necessarily of their own choosing, intellectual magazines have tended to exist apart from the marketplace, and this has allowed those who edit and write for them to reach out not for the widest but for the highest possible audience. In their pages writers can fire away: attacking what seems inhuman to them, defending what they value that elsewhere goes undefended or even unconsidered, shaping and nourishing their dreams of a better life. The questions worth asking about an intellectual magazine are not how it is viewed in the opinion of mankind, or not how often it has been correct on the issues, or how it has changed the world, but instead how has it responded to events, how intelligent has its voice been, what are its principles and how consistently have they been adhered to, and finally how faithful has it been to its own dreams? Judged by these terms, *Dissent's* twentieth anniversary proves an occasion for congratulation. □

The work of JOSEPH EPSTEIN, a visting lecturer in English at Northwestern University, appears frequently in these pages and other magazines. He is the author of *Divorced in America* (1974).

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20 Years of Dissent

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Ignazio Silone

The Choice of Comrades

The last 40 years have witnessed the collapse of most of the great politico-social myths bequeathed to us by the 19th century. As a result, certain kinds of people who had relied on these myths as a compass find themselves in a state of spiritual vagueness and ambiguity that is still far from being clarified. This situation is one aspect of the general crisis of capitalism and anticapitalism. We are confronted with the need for reassessment, not only of the problems of human behavior but also of the greater question of the meaning of our existence. It is not a matter, be it said, even in its subsidiary aspects, of literary diversion. There will always be a number of perfectly respectable people who interpret in their own fashion, by their haircut or the way they knot their ties, the spirit of the age in which they live. For others less fortunate, however, times of crisis may bring graver consequences. My concern in these pages is with them.

Suicide among writers in various countries during the past 30 years has reached an unparalleled figure. It seems to me that however much they may differ outwardly, the majority of these episodes have a common source: what Nietzsche called the nihilism of modern times. The lives of writers are, I think, not less significant than the books they write. Whenever I happen to consider the sense of bewilderment, tedium, and disgust characteristic of our age, my mind turns not to the books of Heidegger, Jaspers, and Sartre but to the suicides of Essenin, Mayakovsky, Ernst Toller, Kurt Tucholsky, Stefan Zweig, Klaus Mann, Drieu La Rochelle, F. O. Matthiessen, Cesare Pavese, and other lesser-known figures. What a flock of terrifying ghosts they seem, when one names them all together! Persecution, exile, isolation, poverty, illness, abnormality—one or the other of these external reasons has been suggested in each case to explain how a man of talent could have sought such a desperate end. But the last writings of these men before death, or their last confidences to their friends, are invariably a confession of anguish or despair at the effort and the futility of living.

These suicides are not to be easily explained away. To pin responsibility for them on any one political regime would clearly be a misrepresentation, since we know that they occurred under widely differing regimes, in Russia, America, and Western Europe. Still less can we blame the pernicious influence of some pessimistic doctrine; Mayakovsky was the poet of a victorious revolution, and the others, from Zweig to Pavese, were deeply rooted in the humanist or religious traditions of the society from which they came. (Indeed, one might well reverse the explanation and say it was precisely because they were not pessimistic enough, because they had banished *Angst* from their doctrine

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and their art, that some of them were to end by succumbing to it so miserably. Inhibition is more deadly than sincerity.)

The decadence of our age, however, had already begun prior to these tragic episodes. It has not merely engulfed a number of cultivated and hypersensitive individuals; it has invaded entire classes and institutions, not even sparing the people. Nietzsche was the first to define this decadence, calling it nihilism, as I said, and giving the word a new meaning that it has retained, a meaning different from that found in Turgenev's famous novel. Since then, wars and revolutions in constant succession have borne out Nietzsche's prophecy, making evident what in his day was still perhaps obscure.

Nihilism, as Nietzsche conceived it, is the identification of goodness, justice, and truth with self-interest. Nihilism is the conviction that beliefs and ideas are, ultimately, a mere facade with nothing real behind them, and that consequently only one thing really matters, really counts: success. It is nihilistic to sacrifice oneself for a cause in which one does not believe, while pretending to believe in it. It is nihilistic to exalt courage and heroism independently of the cause they serve, thus equating the martyr with the hired assassin. And so on.

How did we come to this pass? The First World War is generally blamed as the cause and origin of the disaster; but would that war ever have broken out in the first place had the civilized world not already been in a state of crisis? The war merely demonstrated how fragile were the myths of progress on which capitalist civilization was based. Even in the victorious countries, venerable institutions were subjected to such terrible ordeals that they began to totter like rotten scaffolding. And from them, skepticism and corruption spread and seeped downward to the very foundation of society. Traditional moral and religious values, rashly invoked to prop up the vested interests which were being threatened, were thereby compromised.

The authoritarian restoration which followed the war—first in Italy and the Balkans, later in Germany and elsewhere—was a remedy worse than the disease. How could conservatives ever have deluded themselves into thinking that political tyranny of any kind would eliminate nihilism? On the contrary, fascism in all its forms meant that nihilism was installed in power. The dictatorships strengthened the old instruments of coercion and created new ones, but they did not create a new moral order; indeed, with their atmosphere of fear and servility, they aggravated and exacerbated the general decadence. With the collapse of these regimes, the basic nihilism remained, buried deep in people's consciences.

And so in many ways we are back where we were, except that we are once again free to discuss the moral situation of man without having to make concessions to a false optimism, dissimulation not being a civic virtue in a democracy.

Political regimes may come and go, bad habits remain. The big difficulty is this: nihilism is not an ideology, it cannot be legislated about, it is not a subject for school curricula; it is a disease of the spirit which can be diagnosed only by those who are immune from it or have been cured of it, but to which most people are quite oblivious, since they think it corresponds to a perfectly natural mode of being: "That'ts how it has always been; that's how it will always be."

We are all familiar with the picture that post-Nietzschean and existentialist literature has drawn of the predicament of present-day man. It can be summarized as follows: all links between the existence and the being of man are broken; existence has no meaning beyond itself; what is human is reduced to mere vitality. Before commenting on what I consider the provisional and transient nature of this representation, I feel bound to state that in some respects I find it praiseworthy. I think sincerity is always to be admired,

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especially if it requires a certain amount of courage, for without sincerity neither morality nor art can exist. And moreover, at the stage to which things are now reduced, I as a writer see no other way, outside the freedom of art, of placing before the minds of men the problems that elude them, and of presenting them with a truer image of themselves than that which they see daily in the mirror. However, literature cannot take up a permanent abode in a nihilist situation, and the only way out for it, I think, is to explore courageously the entire surface of this situation. Anyone undertaking to do so with absolute intellectual honesty and an uncorrupted heart should sooner or later be able to reach its farthest limit. At that point, one of two things will happen to him: either he will find the abyss of suicide yawning at his feet, or else he will rediscover some valid meaning in human existence. This is no abstract hypothesis, but the plain truth of what has happened to quite a number of people.

The examples are far from insignificant. Here I shall only mention two: the literary path of Ernst Jünger and that of Albert Camus. The German writer reached the farthest limit of nihilism in his famous message *Der Arbeiter*. In this description of a new type of proletarian, depersonalized and standardized, without heart, soul, or brain —a living robot—he depicted the protagonist of the transformation which is taking place in modern society. The greatest freedom of this human robot would consist in being mechanically employed in the series of civil and imperialist wars on which we have already embarked and which will dominate the coming centuries.

> To sacrifice oneself for a faith [wrote Ernst Jünger] means to reach one's maximum, irrespective of whether that faith is true or false. The mere fact that men throw themselves into the fray, even though they are knotted up with a fear that no discipline and no love of country can dispel, makes them, like martyrs, bear witness to an ultra-human reality that is beyond and within them.

Now indeed the heorism of Jünger's proletarian robot would therefore be all the more sublime the remoter it was from the traditional human sphere and the more closely it resembled that of highly perfected machines. This was a final point beyond which it was impossible to advance. Ernst Jünger retreated from it in time, while Hitler was still in power. In his subsequent works, among which may be mentioned the pages on pain, the novel *Auf den Marmorklippen,* and the diary he kept during the invasion of France in the Second World War, his condemnation of nihilism is increasingly explicit and increasingly based on human motives.

The experience of Albert Camus is different but analogous. No reader of his books can fail to discern the sharp contrast dividing *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* and *L'Étranger* on the one hand, from *La Peste* and the book of essays entitled *L'Homme Révolté* on the other. Camus opens *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* with the concept of suicide, in order to distill from it an explanation of the meaning of life. He bluntly defines as absurd the reasons for living. "To die voluntarily," he writes, "implies that one has recognized, at least instinctively, the absurd nature of this habit, the absence of any serious reason for living, the senselessness of this daily agitation and the futility of suffering." To kill oneself means "simply to recognize that life is not worth the trouble." In compassion Camus finds the cure for this desolate sense of the absurd. "The world in which I live repels me," he wrote later, in *L'Homme Révolté,* "but I feel with its suffering inhabitants." In his novel *La Peste* the existence of the characters is presented, not as the impassive unfolding of arbitrary and meaningless facts, but as the compassionate encounter of human beings suffering and struggling against a common destiny.

At a certain point in *La Peste* one of the

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characters—Rieux, a doctor—meets a municipal clerk named Grand whose wife has just left him, with no ill-will on either side.

> From a distance he looked at Grand, who was standing almost glued to a shop window full of roughly carved wooden toys. Tears were streaming down the cheeks of the old clerk. And those tears shook Rieux, because he understood them and could feel them in the dryness of his own throat. He could even remember the day when the poor fellow had got engaged to be married; he had seen him standing in front of a shop decked out for Christmas, with Jeanne bending toward him, telling him she was happy. No doubt but that Jeanne's fresh voice was echoing now to Grand across the distant years. Rieux knew what the old, weeping man was thinking of at that moment, and he too thought that without love this world of ours is a dead world, and that there always comes a time when, weary of the prisons of work and courage, one wants the face of another human being and a heart filled with the wonder of tenderness. . . . He felt Grand's unhappiness as his own, and something gnawed at his heart at that moment—the fierce anger that comes over one at the suffering which human beings have to endure.

Even the revolt born of pity alone can restore meaning to life.

André Malraux presents a more remarkable case because this French descendant of Nietzsche, through his progress from Communism back to nationalism, gives the impression of having remained a Nietzschean at heart all the time. The stormy curve of his life's journey does indeed seem the adventure of a "superman" seeking tests and opportunities for his own dreams of glorification. Nevertheless it would be unjust to consider it as a superficial movie-hero affair. Between *La Tentation de l'Occident* and *La Psychologie de l'Art* there is more than a change of scene. In 1926 Malraux was announcing the historical downfall of Europe, "this cemetery where only dead conquerors sleep." The Communist revolt of the colored peoples seemed to offer him hope; but how ambiguous was his adherence to it. The virile sense of a new brotherhood of man alternated, in the pages of *La Condition Humaine,* with the intoxication of action for its own sake. In *Le Temps du Mépris,* brotherhood was invoked more wholeheartedly, as the last resort against nihilist desperation. It was an active sympathy, consecrated by the sacrifices which culminated in the act of an unknown comrade who saved Kassner, the Communist leader, from Nazi torture. But did this member act on his own initiative or by order of the party machine? And can brotherhood be founded on anything but freedom and personal responsibility? "Economic servitude is hard," old Alvear was to say in *L'Espoir,* "but if in order to destroy it we are obliged to strengthen political or military or religious or police servitude, then what does it matter to me in comparison?" Revolutions, like trees, are to be judged by their fruits, and not by the effort they cost.

I know that these are isolated examples, and that one or even two swallows do not make a summer. Still they do point to a path of salvation, a true way out of nihilism, which springs from a sure and indestructible element deep-rooted in man.

But to return to my point. The particular spiritual condition I wish to discuss has affinities with the instances I have just mentioned. However, it follows a different path and has a significance of its own. For example, it never starts from philosophical or scientific conviction, but almost always from simple instinctive revolt against family or social surroundings. One fine Sunday some of us stopped going to Mass, not because Catholic dogma seemed to us, all of a sudden, false, but because the people who went began to bore us and we were drawn to the company of those who stayed away. A young man's revolt against tradition is a frequent occurrence in every age and every country, and his reasons are not always clear to the onlooker. According to circumstances,

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it can lead to the Foreign Legion, to common crime, to a film career, to a monastery, or to political extremism. What characterized our revolt was the choice of comrades. Outside our village church stood the landless peasants. It was not their psychology that we were drawn to: it was their plight. A choice once made, the rest, as experience shows, follows automatically. Without the slightest attempt at resistance, indeed with the well-known fervor of neophytes, one accepts the language, symbols, organization, discipline, tactics, program and doctrine of the party to which one's new comrades belong. It is hardly surprising that rarely should anything learned in the catechism and schoolbooks hinder one's docile acceptance of the new orthodoxy. Indeed, one does not even feel the need of refuting them, because all of that has become part of the world one has left behind. They are neither true nor false: they are "bourgeois," dead leaves. The choice is emotional, beyond logic. And the claim of the new orthodoxy, which one has accepted so completely, to be scientific and objective —that is not the least of the inconsistencies that you will vainly seek to force on the attention of the convert.

This is the rule. I have read a certain number of biographies of anarchists, socialists, communists and fascists, and I am more or less familiar with the circumstances that led some of my acquaintances into political activity. So far I have found no exceptions to the pattern I have just described, and if any do exist, I think they are rare. We proclaim ourselves revolutionaries or conservatives for motives, often ill-defined, that are deep within us, and before choosing we are, unknown to ourselves, chosen. As for the new ideology, we learn it, usually, at the schools of the party to which we have already pledged allegiance by an act of faith. Altogether similar—and just as it should be—is the opposite process of abjurement. Ideology is now given the same rough treatment once meted out to the catechism and to patriotic stories. To speak in old-fashioned terms, the head, even in the process of relearning, is towed along by the heart—or, according to the health of the person in question, by the stomach.

There is one duty, however, that we cannot evade: to be aware of what is happening. What could the landless peasants of his Southern Italian village have meant to a young student, in the years immediately preceding the First World War, that he should embrace their cause? He was certainly not thinking of politics as a career. Besides, he as yet knew nothing of the proud Marxist prophecy acclaiming the proletariat as the legitimate heir of modern philosophy. Neither did he know that, after the Milanese revolution of 1848, Carlo Cattaneo had declared the cause of the proletariat to be indissolubly linked thenceforth with that of freedom, one destined to travel through the coming ages with the other, like horseman and rider. He had as yet heard nothing of Rosa Luxemburg's theory of the natural impulse to revolution of the working class, or of Lenin's theory of the forces which propel modern society on the path of progress. Nor did he know of Sorel or other prophets of the new Messiah. But if the new revolutionary theories of the historical mission of the proletariat had not yet reached that remote district of Southern Italy, emigrants returned from America were already prompting the landless peasants to form their first resistance leagues. It is not to be wondered at that a young man already secretly disgusted with his surroundings, witnessing this unaccustomed ferment, should undergo a profound change of heart and become convinced that in an old, tired, decrepit, blasé society such as the one in which he lived, the poor represented the final refuge of life—something real, to which it would be wholesome to attach oneself.

Those were the declining years of an epoch in which a number of events had seemed to prove the myth about the liber-

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ating mission of the proletariat. The fascination of that myth spread far beyond the narrow limits of party politics. It was the great popular alternative to the nihilist decadence of Nietzsche's prophecy—the promise of a new earth and a new heaven. Morals, art, philosophy were all directly influenced by it. And events seemed to indicate that Rosa Luxemburg was right. In those years one did not yet risk contradiction if one claimed that wherever a workers' organization was active, under whatever regime, in whatever climate or social conditions, despite its shortcomings it would move "naturally" toward freedom and renewal. Indeed, a certain episode occurred around 1905 in Moscow which has remained a classic in the history of the workers' movement and seemed to have been created for the express purpose of proving even to skeptics how well-founded was the theory of Rosa Luxemburg about the liberating impulse of the working class. The Czarist secret police, the Okhrana, decided to encourage the formation of a labor union in the hope of drawing underground agitators into it and arresting them. These, however, scented a trap and kept clear of it; but the labor union, despite its police origin, became of its own accord a revolutionary organization, so that the Okhrana was soon obliged to disband it.

Since then, as we all know, the myth of the liberating power of the proletariat has dissolved along with that other myth of the inevitability of progress. The recent examples of the Nazi labor unions, those of Salazar and Peron and, in a broader sense, all reformist and cooperative unions, have at last convinced of this even those who were reluctant to admit it on the sole grounds of the totalitarian degeneration of Communism. Now, however, the decline of that myth must be obvious to anyone who takes the trouble to inform himself of the conditions prevailing in the world beyond his own backyard. It is no longer merely a question of a few privileged workers (the so-called proletarian aristocracy of the imperialist countries, made possible by the exploitation of colonial peoples); nor of the inferior groups on the margin of the productive process (the so-called *Lumpenproletariat*)—but of the normal working classes. Today an experiment such as the Okhrana made in 1905 would not necessarily be doomed to failure. For Marxists the moral to be drawn is clear: a similar way of living no longer determines an identical or analogous way of thinking. Class consciousness is no longer a natural product of class. Ever since this situation arose, ever since there ceased to exist a worldwide trend of the working classes toward freedom, human life has acquired a new aspect, spiritually as well as politically. The workers' world is spiritually broken up. It is multiform. The horse of Carlo Cattaneo has thrown its rider and gone wild again. The worker, as we have seen and as we continue to see, can work for the most conflicting causes; he can be Blackshirt or partisan, executioner or victim, or simply, in rich and peaceful countries, a lazy philistine with no ideals, insured against unemployment, old age, illness, and also against the risk that the insurance company might go bankrupt. But generally, in poor countries, because of his relative political simplicity, he can still be the prey of extremists. He can still be Christ, taking on himself the sins of others; and he can also be Barabbas, an ignoble totalitarian Barabbas, trampling on all that is most human in man. Either way, he is a protagonist on the world stage. He is the *deus ex machina* of modern politics. It is futile to think that this fact can be abolished, or that any democracy can maintain itself for very long, propped by police tribunals in the face of working-class opposition. The vital role of the workers in production, their numbers, their greater social compactness and homogeneity—the sum of these factors in every country gives them the decisive voice in politics. No other single element is so powerful. On it depends the freedom of mankind, and much else. But since it is no longer class that decides, but conscience, we are back where we started.

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One need only look around one to see the state to which consciences have been reduced. Nihilism has spread from the upper classes over the entire surface of the social fabric: the epidemic has not spared the working-class districts. Today the nihilist cult of force and success is universal. And the widespread view that identifies History with the winning side, the ignoble cowardice that leads so many intellectuals to Communism or to McCarthy—that too is nihilism. Are the dead, are the weak always in the wrong? Was Mazzini wrong? Was Trotsky wrong only because he was defeated? Were Gobetti and Matteotti wrong? And did Gramsci begin to be right only after April 1945? Will he cease to be right if the strength of his party declines? And is fear of the hydrogen bomb the fear of a stronger right, a right therefore more convincing than the others?

To the general feeling of personal insecurity, which in our age has been engendered by the economic crisis and the intrusion of the state and politics into every field of human activity, there corresponds the anxious search of individuals for some kind of security and protection in one or other of the political mass parties. This by no means excludes, incidentally, a double game with the opposing party, which might be the winner tomorrow. If ideological criticisms and moral campaigns cannot shake the compactness of the mass parties, if they leave the majority of their members indifferent, it is precisely for the reason mentioned earlier: those joining the mass parties out of inner ideological conviction are very few. And to the opportunism of individuals obsessed with their own security and that of their families, there is added the usurping tendency of collective organizations. Frankly, I cannot think of a single collective organization today that could be said to be untainted by the leprosy of nihilism. Group living, it would almost seem, creates the most favorable temperature for the incubation of its germs. Human stupidity is so monotonous. The deathly mechanism is always the same: every group or institution arises in defense of an ideal, with which it rapidly comes to identify itself and for which it finally substitutes itself altogether, proclaiming its own interests as the supreme value: "Whoever injures the Party is against History." The members of the group in question are unruffled by this procedure; in fact, they find it serves their purposes. The advantages are by no means negligible, because they are completely absolved from all personal responsibility. In the deplorable event of someone having a scruple, all he need do is bring his problem to the propaganda office. If the matter is delicate, the answer will be delivered to him at home. Few people realize that the tyranny of means over ends is the death of even the noblest ends. And it is a mere mystification to claim that the reduction of human beings to the status of instruments and raw materials can ever ensure human happiness.

There is no more melancholy image than that of the persecuted who in their turn become persecutors. Here I should like to recall the terrible letter that Simone Weil wrote to Georges Bernanos in the spring of 1938 about the Spanish Civil War. The Catholic-royalist writer's vehement indictment of the excesses of the Franco repression in Majorca is countered by the anguished confession of the young revolutionary intellectual, then a volunteer on the Republican side. The letter has been published only recently. It expresses a sensitive woman's horror at the useless massacres which accompanied these events. But she had witnessed something else that had made an even more painful impression on her than brute violence. A purer-hearted witness or a more exemplary circumstance would be hard to find.

> I have never seen [she writes] either among the Spaniards or among the French who have come here to fight or to amuse themselves (the latter often being gloomy, harmless intellectuals) anyone who expressed, even in private conversation, repugnance or

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disgust for, or even only disapproval of, unnecessary bloodshed. You talk of fear. Yes, fear has played a part in these killings; but where I was I did not find that it played as large a part as you ascribe to it. Men to all appearances courageous, when dining with friends, would relate with a warm, comradely smile how they had killed priests or "fascists"—a word of elastic meaning. I felt that whenever a certain group of human beings is relegated, by some temporal or spiritual authority, beyond the pale of those whose life has a price, then one finds it perfectly natural to kill such people. When one knows one can kill without risk or punishment or blame, one kills; or at least one smiles encouragingly at those who kill. If at first one happens to feel some revulsion, one hides it, stifles it, fearing to seem lacking in virility. There seems to be in this some impulse or intoxication which it is impossible to resist without a strength of mind which I am obliged to consider exceptional, since I have not found it in anyone. On the contrary, I have seen sober Frenchmen whom I had not previously despised—men who of their own accord would never have thought of killing anyone—plunging with obvious relish into that blood-soaked atmosphere. The very aim of the struggle is blotted out by an atmosphere of this kind. Because the aim can be formulated only in terms of the public good, the good of human beings; and human beings have no value.

And the letter ends: "One sets out as a volunteer, with ideas of sacrifice, only to find oneself in a war of mercenaries, with a great deal of unnecessary cruelty thrown in."

Of course there will be people foolish enough to dismiss Simone Weil's letter as defeatist; but the defeat had preceded it, as an illness precedes its diagnosis. In this worldwide moral shipwreck, what scrap of driftwood can one clutch in order not to drown? Among the reflections of Simone Weil collected under the title *La Pesanteur et la Grâce*, we find this indirect answer, the validity of which goes far beyond politics: one must, she says, "always be ready to change sides with justice, that fugitive from the winning camp."

We have come a long way now from the very simple situation in which some of us revolted against our family surroundings and went over to the side of the proletariat. The proletariat of this world are no longer in agreement among themselves; they are no longer the incarnation of a myth, and if one were to follow them blindly and unconditionally one might find oneself where least one wants to be. The initial choice must now be followed by another. To judge men, it is no longer enough to see if they have calloused hands: one must look into their eyes. There is no mistaking the look of Cain. Do we side with the inmates of the slave-labor camps or with their jailers? This dilemma we can no longer evade, because the executioners themselves are forcing it on us. Threateningly they demand: "Are you with us or against us?" We must call a spade a spade. We are certainly not going to sacrifice the poor to the cause of freedom, nor freedom to the poor, or rather to the usurping bureaucrats who have climbed on the shoulders of the poor. It is a matter of personal honor to keep faith with those who are being persecuted for their love of freedom and justice. This keeping faith is a better rule than any abstract program or formula. In this age of ours, it is the real touchstone.

It should be apparent from the foregoing why humanism in general, literary or philosophical, means very little to us. Perhaps the time for it will come again, but at present we feel very remote from the serenity and harmony it represents. To us it seems that the self-complacency of man implicit in humanism has scant foundation nowadays. Mankind today is in poor shape. Any portrait of modern man, if at all faithful to the original, cannot but be deformed, split, fragmentary—in a word, tragic.

This confession of humility does not cost us an effort, since we have no answers to the

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supreme questions about man's origin and his destiny. Frankly, these traditional problems do not even trouble us. We have stopped pondering the riddle of egg-or-chicken priority, for what is perhaps a very banal reason: we are not responsible for it, and whichever way things may originally have happened, it was not our fault. That is not the sort of problem that can give us sleepless nights. The problems that beset us are those of our present existence, of our responsibility as men of today. Only within these limits can we reach a true definition of ourselves.

This amounts to saying that we are not believers, we are not atheists, and still less are we skeptics. These labels, with their conventional implications, do not concern us. Anyone who tries to attach them to us will merely increase terminological confusion. A distaste for verbalism and facile consolations holds us back from more general statements. A proper awe of the transcendental prevents us from taking its name in vain and using it as a narcotic. And if we are not too proud to confess that there have been moments of anguish and solitude when our thoughts returned with piercing nostalgia to the tradition-bound order, the peace and security of the home we knew in childhood, we are nevertheless obliged to add that love of truth has always ended by prevailing over considerations of personal convenience.

In a situation where the premises of metaphysics and even of history are uncertain and open to question, the moral sense is forced to extend its scope, taking on the additional function of guide to knowledge. The pitfall of abstract and superficial moralism can be a real one, but only if the moral sense is operating on a *tabula rasa*. In reality, even beyond one's frontiers of awareness, one remains a creature of flesh and blood, a man of a certain region, a certain class, and a certain time. For our part, the vital resource that saves us from the extremist situation of nihilism can be easily identified: the same emotional charge which impelled us to our initial choice has not been exhausted by disillusionment. This is not an individual case. I am not using the pronoun "we" as a puffed-up form of the first person singular. Our number is an ever-swelling legion: the legion of refugees from the International. There are really a great many, belonging to no church or political party, who now bear in secret these same burning stigmata.

Does anything at all remain to us? Yes, there are some unshakable certainties. To my way of feeling, they are Christian certainties. They appear to me so deeply immured in human existence as to be identified with it. Man disintegrates when they are denied.

This is too little to constitute a profession of faith, but it is enough for a declaration of trust. The trust is founded on something more stable and more universal than the mere compassion of Albert Camus. It is founded, in the last analysis, on the certainty that we human beings are free and responsible; that we feel the need of reaching out to touch the inmost reality of our fellowmen; and that spiritual communion is possible. The fact that spiritual communion is possible—surely this is the irrefutable proof of human brotherhood? Furthermore, it contains a rule of life. Love of the oppressed is born of it as a corollary that the disillusionments of history—the love devoid of self-interest—can never place in doubt. To be valid, it does not need success. With these certainties as a basis for existence, how can we resign ourselves to seeing man's noblest faculties stifled in so many human creatures born to poverty and wretchedness? How can we conceive of a moral life from which this fundamental concern is absent?

Need I add that this is not to be interpreted in political terms of power or tyranny? To use the oppressed as a stepping-stone to power and then betray them is undoubtedly the most wicked of all sacrileges, because of all human beings they are the most defenseless. Frankly we must confess that we have

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no panacea. There is no panacea for social evils. All we have—and it is a great deal—is this trust that makes it possible for us to go on living. We are forced to pick our steps beneath a sky that is, ideologically speaking, dark. The clear, ancient Mediterranean sky, once filled with shining constellations, is overcast; but this small circle of light that remains to us enables us at least to see where to place our feet for the next step.

This amounts to saying that the spiritual situation I have just described admits neither of defense nor of arrogance. Frankly, it is merely an expedient. It resembles a refugee encampment in no-man's-land, an exposed makeshift encampment. What do you think refugees do from morning to night? They spend most of their time telling one another the story of their lives. The stories are anything but amusing, but they tell them to one another, really, in an effort to make themselves understood.

As long as there remains a determination to understand and to share one's understanding with others, perhaps we need not altogether despair.

Translated by DARINA SILONE □

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Lewis Coser and Irving Howe

Authoritarians of the "Left"

In an authoritarian age it is almost inevitable that manipulative and bureaucratic modes of thought should stain the writings of those who oppose society as much as they debase the writings of those who support it. Nor do we speak here of the Stalinists: they are a separate problem. We have in mind many people who begin with more-or-less socialist and democratic premises, yet, by a curious route, end with authoritarian conclusions.

I

The original impetus of 19th-century socialism was—with some familiar, significant exceptions—profoundly democratic. Marx and Engels, though not they alone, looked toward an awakening of the masses of humanity from the stupor of centuries. Their aim was to transform passive objects into articulate subjects. The high level of economic development they desired had meaning for them not as a "final end"—they were never economic fetishists—but as a means by which to approach the one truly human goal: the humanization of humanity.

Once, however, it became clear that socialism had failed to achieve power, all "the old crap," as Marx had bluntly called it, again rose to the surface of intellectual life. The idea of democratic autonomy, the hope for human sef-realization, was now dismissed as utopian. Among many intellectuals there spread once more—it had never really been absent—an implicit contempt for the masses of human beings, whom they regarded primarily as creatures to be controlled and manipulated.

This was true for many radicals as well. Living as we do in a historical moment when the old socialist passion has died out and a new one has not yet come to life, all the temptations for succumbing to the prevalent trends of authoritarian thought are particularly strong. Imperceptibly, many radicals have come to accept the moral terms of their adversaries. Benevolent manipulation now strikes them as the only "realistic" alternative to malevolent manipulation. But if that is the best radicalism can do, then it has no further reason for existence.

II

A century ago Jacob Burckhardt predicted that the coming age would be the age of the "great simplifiers." He could hardly have had Marxism in mind—but he might as well have. During its early flowering Marxism was one of the most complex and hence *unfinished* constructs of the human intelligence. Now, in the postliberal world of 1955, the simplifiers have taken command.

We are thinking of that "Left" tendency, amorphous in personnel but easily located intellectually, which grants most of the criti-

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cisms made of Russian Stalinism (that it is brutal, inhuman, dictatorial) but then finds a rationale or a half-defense for it in the name of Historical Necessity or in the world-wide drive toward industrialization or in the need for raising, by whatever means, the level of production, or in the claim, true enough, that capitalism is a decadent society. Everything admirable in Marx's thought—his intellectual complexity, his humanist passion, his philosophical flexibility—is neglected in behalf of a simplistic economic determinism which measures human progress by little more than production statistics. This mode of thought is represented by Paul Sweezy in the *Monthly Review*, where it comes closest to an apologia for the Russian regime. It finds another variant in the "orthodox" Trotskyist groups, which see in the fact that Stalinism destroys bourgeois property relations a proof of its "progressiveness." Frederick Schuman and I. F. Stone occasionally express ideas that fall within this orbit of thought. Aneurin Bevan, who is against totalitarianism but is also confused, verges upon this mode of thought when he celebrates "the Chinese revolution." And while Isaac Deutscher cannot at all be identified with this intellectual tendency, he provides it, no doubt unintentionally, with the most subtle and persuasive arguments.

Marx spoke of "the categorical imperative that all conditions must be revolutionized in which man is a debased, an enslaved, an abandoned, a contemptible being." The intellectual tendency of "Left authoritarianism" prefers to speak of the tempo of Russian industrialization. Marx said that the great evil of capitalism was that it "alienated" man from his work and from his self. "Left authoritarianism" prefers to neglect the question of whether the economic expansion it finds so admirable in Russia has led to an increase or decrease in the "alienation" of the Russian workers and intellectuals. Marx insisted that societies must be seen in their social totality, he called his *Capital* a study in *political* economy, he measured the claims of societies by their concrete human consequences. "Left authoritarianism," eager to find some ground for declaring Russian society "progressive" or for anticipating its "democratization," must abstract the element of industrial productivity from its social context.

Let us glance at a rather crude example of the kind of thinking we wish to attack, the very crudeness of which may help get to the root of things.

In his book *Socialism* Paul Sweezy defines socialism as "a system which disallows private property." That is all: we neither omit nor suppress anything from his statement. Whether in a system which "disallows private property" man might still be "a debased, a contemptible being" (and what else has he been forced to become in Russia?) does not seem to concern Sweezy at all. For him the dialectic of property is simple: private is bad, public good.

Along the same lines Sweezy writes that

> the outstanding achievement of socialism in the Soviet Union has been the victory in the war against Nazi Germany. . . . It is the Soviet Union's military success in the war against Germany which more than anything else has convinced the world that socialism really works. This is a fact which historians of the future may well rank in importance along with the October Revolution.

Russia won the war; hence Stalinism really works. (How? Toward what end? In whose interest?) A series of curious parallels follows from this coarsely "pragmatic" argument: In 1920 Lenin lost the war to Poland; hence Leninism didn't *really* work. Hitler almost conquered Europe; hence Hitlerism almost *really* worked, and indeed for a short time may *really* have worked.

Nor is Mr. Sweezy more sensitive with regard to human freedom. "The restrictions on liberty which are characteristic of Soviet Russia," he writes, "are far less symptomatic of the times than the crisis of liberty in the United States." All one needs to know about

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Sweezy as a socialist or simply a democrat can be gleaned from the exquisite delicacy of that word "restrictions."

Now there is no way of *proving* that Sweezy's view of what socialism means is wrong. Socialism being a kind of society that has never yet existed on this planet, he would seem to have as much right to define it in his way as we in ours. But if he defines it as equivalent to the mere abolition of private property and if he then casts this definition within an argument justifying or minimizing the destruction of freedom in Russia, it must be said that not only does his view run counter to almost every strand of the Marxist tradition but, far more important, it projects a vision of the future that is utterly detestable. When a writer provides an eccentric variation to a commonly agreed-upon statement of a social goal, this may tell us almost nothing about the goal, but it does tell us a good deal about the writer. And in this instance what matters is not the writer personally, but the kind of thought he expresses, reducing the socialist ideal to the prison world of 1984.

III

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Marxian theory of economics, one that is likely to resist all attack, was that it rejected the fetishistic view that economic processes were analogous to natural processes, and instead proceeded to interpret economic relations as one aspect of the total existential relations among men. Economic categories, Marx insisted, could not be understood outside of the social relations which flourished at a given historical moment. But to the writers who, in one or another way, speak for "Left authoritarianism" all this has become meaningless. They care for economic plans, technological advances, production figures—in their eyes these in themselves are sufficient to demonstrate the viability and/or the "progressiveness" of Russian society. Unwittingly they revert to the very fetishism against which Marx struggled. But with this difference: *the fetishism of the plan is substituted for the fetishism of the commodity.*

IV

Twenty, even ten years ago it was possible to argue with a Stalinist or a fellow-traveler. If one could convince him that oppression, terror, and misery dominated Russian life, one might break him of his loyalties. Today, however, the tough new "realist" is totally impervious to such arguments, for his half-hidden loyalty to Stalinist thinking is based not on a humanitarian illusion but on a sympathetic identification with precisely the most brutal features of Russian politics. A terrifying change has taken place: a change not in ideas but in values. For the new kind of fellow-traveler all that matters is that in Russia there is a nationalized economy, or that there has been a rise in its productive level or that (on the bones of millions) "social stability" has been established.

Thus Mr. Arthur K. Davis, who is one of the purer specimens of "Left authoritarianism," writes in the *American Sociological Review* that freedom is

> a subjective feeling of personal well-being which results from the objective fact of living in an effectively functioning society . . . a number of concrete patterns of societal organization can meet this abstract definition of freedom: *It is entirely possible that among them is . . . the totalitarian community—once the latter has been stabilized or routinized.* [Emphasis added.]

Here we have entered the realm of "Left" Newspeak: freedom equals slavery, slavery equals freedom. What, one wonders, would Mr. Davis make of Marx's view that "the kingdom of freedom actually begins only where drudgery, enforced by hardship and by external purposes, ends; it thus lies, quite naturally, beyond the sphere proper of material production." To Marx the root *is* man, to Mr. Davis and his cothinkers it is an "effectively functioning society." And here we come to another central trait of the political tendency we are trying to describe: its fatal

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attraction to power, power as lure, power as virtue, power as the one ultimate, undeniable reality of life.

V

A somewhat more subtle argument focuses upon the future. Instead of simply asserting that "what is is right," the writers who express one or another element of "Left authoritarianism" imply that "what will be will be right." This worship of the putative success of the future is often evident in the work of writers who might be ashamed to argue that present might is right; they forget that the present is merely the future of the past. They will admit without hesitation the flaws in the social structure of Russia, but these flaws—a polite word for horrors—weigh rather lightly for them in the balance of History, since they prepare—apparently, by their very accumulation—for the glories of tomorrow.

Yet it is just as dubious to defend the rightness of the future because it is the future as to defend the rightness of the present because it is "given." A moral-political judgment takes on value only when argument is made as to *why* present or future is "right." If that is not done, judgment succumbs to the mere acceptance of the "factuality of facts," whether in the past or future; that is to say, judgment declines into justification.

The burden of moral-political choice cannot be shifted to a defenseless future. Marx felt that "the people cannot really be happy until they have been deprived of illusory happiness by the abolition of religion"—but now we witness a displacement of religious feelings onto the abstraction of History. By shifting the responsibility onto History (as, for example, in the argument that the horrors of Stalinism may be justified by the need for industrialization in backward countries) it becomes possible to avoid political-moral responsibility. In this way the Religion of History can be made to serve as a more flexible apologia for the acceptance of "the given" than can any other-worldly religious system. One is reminded of Kierkegaard's biting comment on Hegel: "His work is full of syntheses, while life is full of choices."

VI

Why have intellectuals become more receptive to authoritarian modes of thought? We cannot even attempt a full answer here, but what seems most important is the argument of failure. Democratic socialism has been defeated: it did not work: it cannot work: it is wrong. No one goes through a process of thought quite so simple, yet as a description of an intellectual development it may be adequate.

But more. The old image of the intellectual as a man on the margin no longer quite holds, neither under Stalinism nor capitalism. Many of those who might once have been forced to the painful necessity of functioning in the interstices of society now have found an honored place close to its summit. The bureaucratized and militarized modern state must use ideology, and for this it needs specialists in the manipulation of opinion, intellectuals who can create bonds of loyalty. These new specialists in human manipulation have learned that only force counts, only toughness wins; they often feel a violent horror of speculative thought, an almost complete cynicism toward anything that does not proceed from the already given. But while this may partly explain the general tendency, there still remains the minority of exceptions, those who continue to feel alienated from society and turn to *the other side*. Here, to provide further analysis, we would have to enter the realms of individual psychology and biography—which we are not prepared to do. Suffice it to say that many of the intellectuals who do turn to a full or partial sympathy toward Stalinism seek there a continuation, a logical fulfillment of the authoritarian patterns of their own world.

For many of the intellectuals who grew up under the influence of Stalinism and who have shaken off its formulas without abandoning its modes of thought, the ideology of

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"Left authoritarianism" provides an extremely comfortable outlook. It no longer speaks to them in the name of liberty, mass spontaneity, the proletariat; "all that," and the social and emotional risks accompanying it, can be assigned to the romantic past. At the same time, however, "Left authoritarianism" preserves and enlarges a cynical element of the traditional fellow-traveling outlook by connecting it with the most up-to-date and sophisticated theories of managerial and bureaucratic society: let the eggs be broken as they will, the omelette will still be made. It permits them to be indifferent to human values while retaining their faith in Dnieperstroy. It thus has become the perfect philosophy for those who have lost faith in *both* capitalism and socialism.

Some years ago George Orwell, in an essay on James Burnham, foresaw this phenomenon with the same sensitivity with which he saw so much else:

> If one examines the people who, having some idea of what the regime is like, are strongly Russophile, one finds that, on the whole, they belong to the "managerial" class of which Burnham writes. That is, they are not managers in the narrow sense, but scientists, technicians, teachers, journalists, broadcasters, bureaucrats, professional politicians: in general middling people who feel themselves cramped by a system that is still partly aristocratic, and are hungry for more power and more prestige. . . . Burnham, although the English Russophile intelligentsia would repudiate him, is really voicing their secret wish to destroy the old, equalitarian version of socialism and usher in a hierarchical society where the intellectual can at last get his hands on the whip.

VII

The most outwardly impressive argument of "Left authoritarianism" (especially for those to whom "economics" always seems more impressive than anything else) is the argument of industrialization. It is here that Isaac Deutscher, while in intention clearly distinct from the political tendency we are describing, provides it nonetheless with its most sophisticated rationale.

An essential element of "Left authoritarianism" is the idea that the expansion of productive forces is "progressive" or at least potentially "progressive." Now it may readily be granted that a certain expansion of productive capacities is a *necessary* condition for the emergence of a more human society. But it is a gross error to assume that for attaining such a society the mere expansion of productive forces is a *sufficient* condition. What matters most is the relationship between the expansion of productive forces and the quality of the human (or class) consciousness that accompanies it.

Nothing can be more misleading than the analogy that so occupies Isaac Deutscher, the analogy between the bourgeois and socialist revolutions. Bourgeois society could develop without the direct political rule of the bourgeoisie; socialism cannot develop without the democratic rule of the workers or, if you will, the people. Much could be done *for* the bourgeois, everything must be done *by* the socialist working class. Nor is this a matter of schematic dogmatism: it inheres in the very idea of socialism. The working class can attain social power only if and when it forms itself through its own organs of self-determination, only if and when it creates its own institutions capable of assuming the burden of a new society. Hence as long as the working class, as in present-day Russia, is prevented from achieving an awareness of its own distinctiveness, it cannot be said to have the capacity for ordering society. This is an elementary axiom of Marx's thought, which can also be found in Hegel, who writes in *The Philosophy of Laws:* "The lower classes have been left more or less unorganized. And yet it is of the utmost importance that they should be organized, for only in this way can they become powerful. Without organization, they are nothing but a heap, an aggregate of atoms."

A society like that in Russia, which prevents the free and spontaneous organization

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of the workers, therefore cannot be said to facilitate the achievement of socialism. Totalitarian society breaks up human and social bonds, it destroys the ties of fraternity that are a precondition for socialist values; it reduces the masses to a heap, an aggregate of atoms. Clearly, then, the meaning of industrialization in 20th-century Stalinism cannot be adduced from 19-century capitalism.

Nor is this significantly changed by the fact that Marxist writings have been utilized in the Russian state ideology. Just as medieval schoolmen used elements of the Greek tradition, and the Bible was used as a text by the inquisitors, so Marx, distorted, mutilated, and disfigured, has become a text from which the Soviet regime can, at convenience, extract citations. The masses, on the other hand, have been prevented, by the atomization and suppression to which the regime subjects them, from testing the truth at the core of the Marxist argument: that only in and through their own concerted action can men achieve the removal of hateful social conditions. To see in the cynical manipulation of Marxist terms by the state bureaucracy a means for the perpetuation of socialist consciousness is an ideological parallel to the view that the Stalinist regime performed the distasteful task of primitive accumulation "for" the workers. It not merely ignores the qualitative distinctions between bourgeois and socialist transformations; it also ignores the *specific* and *novel* elements of totalitarianism, i.e., the fusion of ideology with terror.

Few of the social-cultural advantages that industrialization has traditionally brought to the West have yet appeared in Stalinist Russia. It is easy enough to say that industrialization prepares the ground for democracy, but to say this is to view the relationship of economy to politics abstractly rather than to examine the *concrete* way in which Russian industrialization has been purchased at a catastrophic cost to human consciousness.

Historically, the early phases of industrialization in the West were accompanied by sharp and, in the main, open social struggle. From this process of social struggle rather than as an automatic corollary of industrialization, the great democratic triumphs that we associate with the 19th century were won. They came not simply because England was being industrialized; they came because the industrialization was accompanied by a rich social history in which a vast growth of human awareness took place.

In Russia things have been entirely different. Here the course of social history during the period of industrialization has witnessed the destruction of those very rights, both civil and human, which are generally pointed to as the justification for the horrors of English industrialization. No free intelligentsia, for example, has been able to appear in Stalinist Russia as it did in 19th-century England, fiercely criticizing the repellent features of society and developing an independent attachment to democratic norms. Imagine merely what a Dickens could do for and to present-day Russia! It is precisely the absence of any *possibility* of a Dickens in present-day Russia which suggests how false and facile is the analogy between the process of industrialization in bourgeois society and in Stalinist society.

When it is sometimes argued that it is not inconceivable that the Russian bureaucracy might be induced to give up *some* of its privileges, one is ready to agree—though the problem is at present so hypothetical as to be virtually irrelevant. No ruling class has ever, of course, remained free from the pressure of change, all ruling classes have to some degree felt the need to adjust themselves to new conditions. The real question, however, is whether a ruling class has ever voluntarily given up its *essential* privileges, i.e., its ruling position. For this phenomenon, we submit, there are no historical precedents.

Would the disappearance of some privileges and some abuses, together with the continuation of the basic social and human relationships that characterize Russian society today, be sufficient to give the Russian regime a clean bill of socialist or democratic

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health? Those who are prepared to answer this question, however gingerly, in the affirmative may be said to be "Left authoritarians." Here, precisely, lies the test. For it is not inconceivable that after Stalin the standard of living may rise in Russia. Nor is it inconceivable that the Russian terror will be lessened, or at least regularized and "normalized." Not very much can be expected, since the pressure of the international conflict is likely to keep the Soviet regime from making too many concessions—and for the international situation the Russian regime bears, of course, a prime responsibility. But even if certain economic concessions and improvements were to be granted, even if a "relaxation" were to take place within the tension of totalitarianism, the one thing that seems beyond crediting is that the regime would grant, or would grant without the most terrific pressure *against* it, any significant political and social rights.

Which leads us to another point requiring clarification. If the distasteful characteristics of Russian society stemmed primarily from distortions within the sphere of consumption (that is, in the distribution of goods), then indeed changes in this sphere would amount to a change in the essential structure of society. But that is not the case.

The party secretaries and executives, the Red Directors and Soviet managers do not just "live better"—though they certainly and grossly do that too. They control the means of production and the means of coercion. Differentials in the sphere of consumption are only the most obvious symbols of differentials in the sphere of social and political power, as well as in the process of production. To be sure, in classical capitalism the bourgeoisie controlled the means of production because of the private ownership of each individual entrepreneur in his share of the social means of production, but such private ownership is by no means the only way a ruling class has asserted its dominion. The ruling classes of classical India and China did *not* individually own the chief means of production, the land.

The Russian bureaucracy controls the means of production not by right of private property but by holding in its hands the state, the levers of political and social and economic power. It commands them not individually but collectively. The difference involved may be to a limited extent compared —though comparisons are always hazardous —with that between a 19th-century entrepreneur and a modern corporation. The heads of many modern corporations do not themselves own a share in them, they derive their power essentially from an ability to control, which is partly based on the incapacity for action of the nominal owners, the often atomized and powerless stockholders. *Mutatis mutandis,* Russian society may be compared to a vast corporation. The bureaucracy does not individually own, it collectively controls—and hence prevents all other strata from participation in decision-making. Individual members of the bureaucracy, like individual entrepreneurs, may run the risk of elimination from its ranks, but the bureaucracy as such is a self-perpetuating ruling class whose power is defined by its relation to the means of production, i.e., by its relation to the state. Far from being a parasitic excrescence on a healthy body, it is an integral element of a corrupt social structure.

When Marx spoke of the increase of productive forces as a prerequisite for socialism, he had in mind—one can say this with some assurance—not an isolated development in one or another country but a general or "universal" development of, at least, the Western world. He had in mind, as well, a growth of social consciousness which he assumed to be parallel with the process of bourgeois industrialization—but which our experience has shown not at all parallel with Stalinist industrialization. From Marx's point of view the over-all development of productive forces was "progressive" because it made *possible* a society of plenty and leisure. But today we have reached, on a world

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level, a degree of productive expansion sufficient for beginning the construction of a world socialist economy. This is not to say that many areas of the world, taken in isolation, possess the economic prerequisites for the flowering of a socialist economy; it is simply to say that if the worldwide productive forces could now be utilized in a socially constructive manner it would be possible to hasten appreciably the industrialization of the backward areas. So that what counts now is the political-social use of the productive forces already available. It therefore seems possible that if we lived in a sane and fraternal world the problem of raising the economic and cultural level of Asia could be solved without having to subject it to all the horrors of primitive accumulation which characterized the English experience.

With regard to this problem, as with regard to many others, politics in the 20th century primes economics. Political and moral values—and choices—have assumed crucial relevance precisely to the degree that economic and technological problems appear to become manageable.

Hence, the process of primitive accumulation in Russia and/or China cannot be judged in terms analogous to the primitive accumulation of the bourgeois world. For where the bourgeois accumulation was the opening to a new level of social consciousness, the Stalinist accumulation is the conclusion to the failure of the worldwide socialist movement and the destruction of its consciousness.

It is sometimes said that the Stalinists have at least brought millions of previously dormant people into modern history. But this is merely a less troubled way of remarking that modern totalitarian movements, both Stalinist and fascist, have to employ, even as they rigidly channel, the energies of the masses. What is not said is *how* these previously dormant millions are brought into modern history. For they are brought into it not as subjects learning to act autonomously but as objects being manipulated.

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Marx did not say: economic levels determine human consciousness. He said: social existence determines human consciousness. Between the first and second of these statements there is the difference between vulgarity and insight. And if it is indeed social existence that determines human consciousness, it may well be asked: what kind of human consciousness, what quality of life, can follow from the social existence that Stalinism imposes upon its peoples?

The argument is not here exhausted, it is barely begun. For we recognize that these issues are of first importance. Furthest from our mind is to lay down any "line," any inflexible dogma. Yet we strongly feel that if there is to be any hope for the revival of socialist consciousness, the intellectual tendency we have labeled "Left authoritarianism" must be decisively rejected. □

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George Lichtheim

Collectivism Reconsidered

This article appeared at the time under the pseudonym G. L. Arnold.

When one glances through the writings of our modern, hard-headed, nonutopian sociologists—students of industrial organization, of "labor relations," of the corporation and its managerial structure—one notices a strain of controlled optimism in their otherwise businesslike and down-to-earth findings. Much as they would disclaim sympathy with syndicalist notions or other forms of social romanticism, they are far from hopeless about the human pattern disclosed by large-scale organization. If the outlook is none too good for those at the bottom of the ladder, there are compensations in the offing for the higher and middle grades of the hierarchy: not merely for Burnham's "managers," [1] but the entire group of administrators, consultants, scientists, technologists, engineers, and skilled workers —for the group that might perhaps be termed the technological stratum. It is not simply that this group is growing in numbers, in social importance, and perhaps in the collective influence it exerts on industrial policy—there is also the emergence of a novel form of "industrial democracy" within this particular corporate body, a democracy based on technical competence; and because of it one may witness the growth of an *esprit de corps* that causes people in this group to hold together, as professionals usually do, against those outside their own order. Some of the most enthusiastic descriptions of modern large-scale industry have been provided by people who claim for "the corporation" those virtues of intelligent social cooperation, voluntary discipline, intelligent planning, scientific training, etc., which are in fact aspects of any large-scale organization whose work is rationally planned. Insofar as such tributes are deserved they reflect the impact of scientific training on the way in which things are managed under conditions where both the administrator at the top, and the foreman near the bottom of the ladder, must know something about the technology of production. Technical

[1] Professor G. D. H. Cole, in a suggestive paper published in the December 1950 issue of the *British Journal of Sociology*, stresses the vagueness and ambiguity of Burnham's terminology, his tendency to shift from political to economic categories and vice versa, his failure to differentiate between those in control of the industrial setup and the technologists who merely service it, etc. Certainly a writer who in 1941 predicted that the whole world, America included, would rapidly go fascist, encourages a certain wariness on the part of readers. But I think Burnham may be credited with having asked the right question, though he probably gave the wrong answer. And at any rate he has helped to bring sociology down into the political arena—where it belongs!

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education of workers, and scientific training of managers, is part of the same process of what the Germans call *Verwissenschaftlichung;* so, too, is the growing importance of teamwork and, at the higher levels, of what is vaguely known as planning.

All this of course implies an ethos very different from that of the old-fashioned entrepreneur, who was in the habit of extemporizing means and ends simultaneously and who seldom troubled his head about the connection between them. To "proceed according to plan" is to assume the overriding importance of a general idea—in other words, of a collective idea. It is just because of this that individualism of the traditional sort goes by the board. But its place is not, or not necessarily, taken by bureaucratic routine—not even under a totalitarian regime, which tries to stifle initiative in every field save the one in which it remains dependent on the maximum energizing of human activity: that of production. Rather, it may be and often is succeeded by forms of cooperation that leave considerable scope to personal and team initiative. It depends on who is planning and for what. If the ethos developed in this form of process is radically different from that of the old free-wheeling entrepreneur, it is not necessarily inferior to it in point of willingness to assume responsibility. "Serfdom" would seem to be incompatible with anything as dynamic as modern technology; whether the system is run on capitalist, socialist, or "managerial" lines, the built-in economic pressures must find their equivalent at some level in a type of organization that gives scope to the personality of the organizer.

Such changes in the prevailing pattern are not confined to industry. They can be traced in, for example, the military field, where science has for decades marched hand in hand with the emergence of the small highly trained combat team—or guerrilla group! Recent wars and paramilitary struggles have been distinguished by revolutionary innovations in this field rather than by stale routine. The trenches of the First World War marked a pause between two techniques; since then the stalemate has been broken and the outcome has been to restore the importance of both the individual and the small group. One hears a great deal about push-button warfare, but what seems to be happening in fact is rather that small teams of specialists, and somewhat larger groups of technicians, are developing forms of activity denied to the old foot-slogging infantry. In the 1939–45 war, mass armies were already at a disadvantage unless broken up into small units that could develop initiative. The Germans were first in this field and owed much of their early success to this fact. The lesson has now been assimilated by all modern armies, and where they are still reluctant to learn it, it is being drummed into them by the successes of guerrilla warfare. Oddly enough, it is in the age of the thermonuclear bomb that the homemade weapon has come into its own again. Partisans waylay the armored column; the hand grenade proves effective in fighting the tank. At the very moment when its demise was proclaimed by the totalitarians, democracy thrust its shaggy head through the window and dropped a submachine gun on the floor.

At the "managerial" level, so to speak, the process takes a different form, as befits the distinction between those who plan and those who merely cooperate. But it is not a form that lends support to the pessimists who see only the growth of bureaucracy in an increasingly hierarchical order. The same world conflict that gave rise to the resistance movement and the partisan swarm also saw the emergence of the armored spearhead racing far ahead of the infantry, the air armada flying in formation over the battlefield: at both ends of the scale the specialist breaks loose from the inert fabric geared to an outmoded technology. The

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armored division resembles the mechanized plant—a complex organization with hundreds of vehicles and a big repair-and-maintenance problem; clearly a job for the expert, who in turn might reasonably think that he should be called in to advise on general strategy. Where this was not done—as in the France of 1940, or the Germany of 1945—disaster resulted. De Gaulle's career epitomizes the possibilities of the new order. Half his appeal lay in his ideas on scientific warfare, rather than in his old-fashioned patriotism or his unbending refusal to concede defeat. The general who was also a technical expert turned out to be the central figure in his country's crisis; below him the military and professional hierarchy included hundreds of his type who later rallied to him, and these military reformers were helped and joined by modern-minded technicians and their political friends. Together they explored the possibilities of a new ethos. Means of destruction, like means of production, can become so closely patterned that the same individual intelligence is able to supervise their technical functioning and to direct their operational use: the tank commander, like the factory manager, is both a technical expert and a leader of men. Hence a certain penchant for elite doctrines, which in turn serve to frighten the more conventional democratic spokesmen. In the 1930s de Gaulle encountered resistance both from the conservative leaders of the military hierarchy and from the majority of political figures, some of whom scented authoritarian tendencies behind his scheme for the creation of a highly trained *corps d'élite*. Léon Blum (who later changed his mind on this subject) cried out against the establishment of a "Praetorian Guard." Such fears unfortunately contributed to the destruction of the Third Republic, whose leaders had identified democracy with egalitarianism. The Fourth Republic, no less democratic than its predecessor, has overcome its fear of mechanized divisions and seems none the worse for it.

It may be asked how this pattern fits the accepted image of a social order in which the producers collectively own their tools, or at least exercise some control over their use. Does it amount to more than an extension of privilege for the upper layers of the new technological hierarchy, civilian or military? In the first place, even the introduction of a limited form of collective responsibility at some level would be a net gain. Second, no one ever pretended that democratic control can operate at every level upon the totality of the system. It is enough, for a start, if those in charge of their particular sector take an intelligent interest in its operation and are given the right to do so. If every one of the "professional hierarchies" were so organized as to encourage autonomy, self-government, decentralization of authority—this would seem to be the sane and healthy core of the "corporatist" idea travestied under regimes which never seriously meant to apply it. A great deal of the present outcry against centralized planning would come to an end; so would phenomena such as the commercialization of the press and the other media of mass communication. Why indeed should newspapers and radio stations not be controlled by those who work on them? "Workers' control" might usefully start in places where there exists no social prejudice against people who are "merely" workers. In fact, however, there is scarcely a large-scale organization where there could not be made a start if those in control were not in principle opposed to it. Even under the 1945–51 Labour government in Britain, resistance to the idea of "workers' control" in the mines (where it would, according to some experts, have been feasible) came from those who had in advance made up their minds against it. They have had their reward in the form of disappointing coal output. Nationalization having been planned on purely bureaucratic lines, its relative failure in terms

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of output and of social relations was then blamed on Labour, or on the socialist concept. But the only place where socialism and the workers could come together was precisely the place where it was determined they should not meet: on the factory floor or at the pit-head. Giving real authority to production committees would have meant strengthening shop stewards as against union organizers who had no intention of furthering such experiments. So the issue was drowned in a flood of talk about "joint consultation." It may well be that the Labour government missed a major opportunity in this field.[2]

Any future advance will probably have to start from a concept of technical education that envisages it not simply as a means of improving efficiency, but as a link between the worker and the planner. Pushed far enough, such education, if it cannot altogether eliminate the distinction between mental and physical labor, can at least set up its own hierarchy in the workshop, turn the worker into an amateur technologist, the soldier into a potential NCO, and thus overcome the modern "alienation" that undermines efficiency no less than welfare. What the totalitarian regimes have attempted along these lines is just successful enough to give our own society the necessary push. If Stakhanovism can score some degree of success under conditions where labor is deprived of its bargaining power, the reason is surely that, for all its systematic distortion in the interest of maximum output and the deliberate creation of new group privileges, it has tapped some hidden source of willingness to participate. For the worker indeed technology holds the most direct access to science and everything that lies beyond it. But technical education without responsible participation soon loses its spur or degenerates into yet another aspect of "public relations in industry." For collectivists, its significance on the contrary lies in the fact that it arises spontaneously out of the modern process of work, while at the same time it enables the worker to develop his individuality.

II

Such ideas are, or should be, in accordance with the traditional aims of the labor movement, insofar as that movement is responsive to socialist tendencies; for socialism is the point where the innate collectivism of the workers' movement encounters the drive for more responsible participation in the process of production. The original aim of organization no doubt is simply the need for collective bargaining; at this level the workers experience the claim of solidarity, which becomes *the* distinctive touchstone of labor organization, and the central concept around which the consciousness of the worker takes shape. "Solidarity" is for him what "honor" was for the feudal order, and "honesty" for the bourgeois: a claim that is felt as absolute because the existence of the individual depends on it. The energizing power of such ideals, and their loss of attraction when confronted with alternative ways of life, makes up three-quarters of the real—as distinct from the official—history of social organization. Implicit in each is an exclusiveness which is both the strength and the limitation of the organism they sustain: since the claim is absolute, the

[2] Cf. Professor Cole's proposals (in *Is This Socialism?*, New Statesman pamphlet, London 1954) for introducing workers' control at the factory level: "This I believe to be entirely practicable, provided that the policy receives the full backing of a sympathetic Labour government—but not otherwise. What it involves is that the Trade Unions shall . . . transfer to the workers, under Trade Union supervision, certain of the functions of workshop discipline and organization that are at present in the hands of foremen and supervisors appointed by the employers to order the workers about." In this context it is of course immaterial whether the employers are private owners or bureaucratic state boards. The London dock strike of October 1954, which involved an issue of labor discipline, will perhaps in retrospect appear as the first major conflict that turned on the worker's status rather than his income. From this standpoint the various personal and political factors which served to inflame this particular dispute appear secondary and not especially interesting.

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practical consequences that flow from it cannot readily be abridged for the sake of convenience. Thus "loyalty," in its blindness, may become an obstacle to the attainment of aims to which the workers themselves are committed, since leaders who rise from the ranks tend to lose the confidence of their erstwhile followers.

The labor movement, especially at the trade union level, is desperately egalitarian. Its ethos is so entirely centered upon "all for one, one for all" that it cannot adapt itself to forms of process in which the hierarchy of skills automatically confers social status. Nor should it be expected or urged to do so. Just because we are moving into an increasingly planned and hierarchical society, the primitive democracy of organized labor becomes the chief safeguard against authoritarian and, ultimately, despotic tendencies. Under Stalinist-fascist rule, where this democracy has been smashed, the safeguard is lost and we confront the specter of *1984*. Yet the unions are potentially an obstacle not merely to totalitarianism, but to forms of planning compatible with democratic control. At all times and in all societies, trade unions have stood for less work, more pay, more leisure, the minimum of rationalization compatible with job security, and a rate of advance geared to that of the slowest and weakest member of the team. To reproach them with this would be absurd: the placing of a brake upon mere efficiency is their *raison d'être*. Unions exist to protect the worker not only against market fluctuations and loss of earnings, but equally against the pressure of mechanization. This has not prevented some trade union movements, e.g., in the United States, from taking part in rationalizing the production process; but it is only where autonomous labor organizations have been replaced by state-controlled ones that organized resistance to the drive for maximum output has disappeared. Here, though the workers may protect themselves by ca'canny, they can no longer utilize the unions to slow down the rate of technical progress, which thus tends to be high. Moreover, they cannot effectively oppose any collective slogan to a regime that is itself in appearance, and to some extent in intention, collectivist.

It is only under conditions of political freedom that the tension between labor's prime aims and their socialist derivatives has a chance of working itself out. Here its solution—never completely realized—depends on labor's acceptance of the goal of a freely planned society with a high and rising standard of productive performance. The unions, which necessarily stand in the center of this difficult process of reorientation from one level of awareness to another, cannot help facing both ways. They must continue to protect their members and yet assist the whole community to realize its aims. This is true even of the typical "mixed economy" of our age, let alone of the planned society that remains the only possible goal of democratic socialism. It is clearly not true of the centralized state-controlled economy of totalitarianism: there the conflict has been violently resolved in favor of one of its elements. The ruling political party, amalgamating ever more profoundly with the socially dominant stratum, sees to it that exploitation reaches the maximum rate compatible with efficiency. In a sense this is the most rational social order conceivable. It is nonetheless unstable, its internal contradictions showing in the constant need to reinforce the apparatus of repression and in the gradual emergence of a breach between the planners and the planned. Yet it maintains itself, albeit dictatorially, as long as it has the support of the new social key stratum: the technical intelligentsia. One should not conclude that the ruling party functions as an "organ" of the new directing class, except in a vague and metaphorical sense. The point is that the interests of the party and of the privileged stratum coincide, at any rate in the area where emphasis is placed by both on the aim of maximum productivity. If the technical intelligentsia

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in a sense is hoist with its own petard—since it is tied to the regime by the latter's unshakable allegiance to planning for higher production—the Communists themselves are held to their task by the need to interpenetrate ever more profoundly with the key stratum. Without the latter's active support they cannot govern, far less meet the competition of political rivals whose own economy is still dynamic enough even by totalitarian standards.

Thus the political issue of our day is joined in the one field where technical progress confers ever greater power and responsibility upon the upper layer of the new social hierarchy. No wonder every Communist movement (starting with the Russian party since the period of the great purges in the '30s) has increasingly transformed itself into an organization (not, however, an "organ") of the new elite. The Stalinist drive for maximum industrialization and maximum output has its own logic and even dialectic: if it subjects the entire society, including its top stratum, to the tyrannical rule of the planners and the secret police, it also compels the Communists to dispense with working-class support and to transform their own ideology into a crude technocratic vision of endless material advance at the expense of all human and social considerations. And it becomes a veritable caricature of the standard Victorian confession of faith in a mid-19th-century milieu such as the Manchester whose inhuman concentration on money-spinning so horrified the youthful Engels. Once this transformation has occurred it is not open to the Communist party to revert to its original role as a representative of working-class aims. It cannot do so without sacrificing the goals it sets for the new directing stratum. For although the workers —or some of them—may incidentally benefit from the headlong drive for greater output, the central energizing concept is no longer democratic but frankly authoritarian and hierarchical: Stalinism recognizes the key role of the technical intelligentsia in the planned society it is building, and it assigns to the party the difficult task of mediating between the directing stratum and the masses. To do this the party must satisfy two apparently contradictory requirements: its power must be absolute, but it must also respond to the major needs of the technocratic stratum. This, however, is the problem of every absolutism. Insoluble in theory—hence the theorists of absolutism are either blind to its function or deliberately dishonest —it is by no means so in the day-to-day business of overcoming its own contradictions by storing up fresh unsolved problems for the future. Under totalitarian rule this process takes the form of periodic "purges." The purge indeed is the mechanism whereby the party from time to time restores the balance between the conflicting pressures laid upon it by its dual role of absolutist ruler of society and technocratic organizer in the interest of the new directing stratum. There is pressure at both ends of the mechanism, for *raisons d'état* may require measures unpalatable to all groups and it takes an absolute ruler to mediate such conflicts, once the democratic mechanism has been abolished. The party leaders must therefore be treated as infallible—though by a familiar paradox it is precisely these infallible leaders who from time to time are "unmasked" as saboteurs.

No examination of this kind can afford to overlook the political developments of recent years, which have brought about this kind of monolithic organization. The Communist party is what it is, and it functions in the way it does, because its leaders have once and for all made up their minds that a total reorganization of society is possible and necessary, and that it must be achieved by force, from above. Similar aims were of course inherent in the various fascist movements, and to the extent that the latter have been superseded by the Stalinist drive it can be said that modern Communism is

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postfascist—not in the superficial sense that it has taken the place of a now defunct threat to democracy, but in the more important one that it has inherited and absorbed the ensemble of fascist organization and ideology. The fact itself is familiar to students of European politics, but its sociological significance is veiled by Communist silence on the key issue.

In a sense the Communist theorists have been keeping silent about it ever since the German debacle of 1933, which disclosed the fundamental miscalculation of utopian Leninist Communism. That miscalculation was the belief in the existence—in industrial countries such as Germany—of a "revolutionary proletariat" with a spontaneous capacity for political organization, even under a hostile totalitarian dictatorship. It was the collapse of working-class resistance to Hitler in 1933, and the almost total passivity of labor during the 12 years that followed, which cured the Comintern of its error. Many factors no doubt went into that experience: the destruction of the traditional working-class parties and organizations, with the resulting loss of leadership; the Nazi regime's success in banishing unemployment, though at the price of war preparations, etc. The great fact remains that for 12 years labor did not stir, while the dictatorship maintained itself, thanks to the more or less whole-hearted support of just that key stratum which was simultaneously beginning to emerge in the U.S.S.R.: the technical intelligentsia.

It took some time until the lesson sank in, but by 1945 it had been learned: Communism must cease to be "proletarian." In the language of overt political discussion this discovery was translated into the harmless formula that the party must "learn to address itself to all groups." The real significance of the change was more profound: the Communist leadership had at last understood that to the Stalinist "revolution from above" there corresponds a social stratum which organizes the planned society from the top downward—the technological intelligentsia. If Hitler, with his adventurist mentality and program, could govern in this fashion, why not the Communist party? In this sense, 1933 has become the watershed between the old and the new doctrine of revolution—between "Communism, utopian and scientific," to paraphrase Engels. "Revolution" no longer signifies "liberation of the toilers," but "all power to the planners." In Marxian terms this signifies a change in the class structure of the party. Unquestionably the leaders are aware of it. Hence the peculiar moral climate of modern Communism, with its double standard of truth for the elect, its contempt for "the masses," and its elevation of the individual conscience to public enemy number one.

Phenomena of this kind are, it seems to me, of equal concern to the sociologist and to the political scientist. They indicate the domain where both disciplines may be expected in future to overlap. At the present time, it seems particularly important to stress the role of the technical intelligentsia under totalitarianism, since it has lately become the fashion to analyze revolutionary movements —whether in Czarist Russia or contemporary India—in terms of intelligentsia politics. Such attempts to introduce scientific concepts into political discussion represent an important advance—on condition that the social context is kept in sight. An effort to define *all* revolutionary movements as expressions of hostility toward the *status quo* on the part of intellectuals may give employment to numerous historians—some have already gone to work, from this point of view, on the history of the French Revolution—but it does not significantly advance our understanding of the current situation. The modern totalitarian regimes must be viewed in the context of a rapidly changing industrial society, in which the growing importance of planning translates itself into the emergence of a hierarchy centered upon certain key groups. It is not the intelligentsia in general that forms the core of the Soviet

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regime, but the technical intelligentsia in particular. We shall never get anywhere in political science if such distinctions are not given due weight.[3] Equally, we shall make little progress if we abstract from the reality of class conflict. Every totalitarian regime in one sense represents an attempt to do away with the class struggle. Though the monolithic community is an illusion, the monolithic party is real enough, and what keeps it alive is the attempt to substitute the state for society: to make the government the final arbiter of all social conflicts. Historically, the attempt to impose such a system grows out of the experience of political breakdown under conditions in which the various pressure groups of a fully developed mass democracy are deadlocked and, consequently, the state ceases to function. That was true of the situation that brought Mussolini and Hitler to power, and in principle this particular experience could be repeated in any modern democracy with fully developed sectional and class organizations that function as pressure groups. It is a truism that political parties—and, at a higher level, the state—exist for the purpose of arbitrating such sectional conflicts. It is the distinctive feature of modern monolithic "state parties" that they amalgamate the functions of the party with those of the state: the former becomes all-embracing and compulsory, while the latter is politicalized to the last degree. Under fascism the official justification for this state of affairs can occasionally be reduced to variations on the theme "the king's government must be carried on," but the underlying reality is that the state has been captured by one particular political organization with a program for arbitrating all social differences. Fascist theory identifies society with the state, and since the latter is *per definitionem* "above" class and sectional struggles, these are viewed as hostile to the real interests of society. In modern Communist doctrine, on the other hand, the state-party regime may appear variously as an expression of "true" democracy, or as the political form of the "dictatorship of the proletariat"; but at any rate Communist theorists are in no doubt that it is incompatible with the sectional push and pull that is the lifeblood of our modern pluralist democracies.

We have here another instance of the peculiar dialectical relationship between fascist and Communist movements, and of their tendency to copy each other. It would be unrealistic, however, to overlook the common social factor: both movements ultimately compete for the support of the technical intelligentsia, and their real faith is technocratic, i.e., indifferent to property relations in industry. Communists and fascists can both argue that they are concerned with the overriding interests of the community, and they can do so because from the technocratic standpoint it is a matter of indifference whether the means of production are "owned" by private capitalists or by the state, provided they are "run" by the new directing stratum and the workers are kept well in hand and forbidden to strike. In this sense, and in this sense only, fascism and Stalinism are ideologies of the new class, which, like every new class, identifies itself with "the state," i.e., the public good. It is only a step from here to the apparently paradoxical phenomenon of Communist regimes engaging in forcibly suppressing the class struggle and even banishing it from Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist theory. True, the proximate cause of this drive to establish

[3] A suggestion that leads to the further remark that, for all the cultural resemblances to mid-Victorian society which appear so striking to the student of Soviet affairs, one cannot speak of a "middle class" or "bourgeoisie" in the U.S.S.R., unless such terms are to be completely emptied of meaning. The strains within the dictatorship (between the party leaders, the bureaucracy of planners, the technical intelligentsia, and the masses) constitute a pattern utterly different from that of Western democratic politics. The term "bourgeoisie" in any case has long been used to designate the property-owning minority of the old "middle class," and it should not be employed by historians to fill the gaps in their own conceptual apparatus.

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conformity is the need to erect an unchallengeable center of authority, which shall mediate all sectional conflicts and, if necessary, repress them by force. But the ideology that subserves this purpose would be ineffective if it did not echo the demand of the social key stratum for a "strong" authority with power to plan, and its indifference to the conflicting claims of the major classes. The new absolutism, like its predecessor, answers a social need other than the traditional urge of the state bureaucracy to establish conformity and suppress opposition. The more "rational" and "scientific" its ideology, the better its chance to absorb the technological stratum, but the latter's rationality comes to a decided halt before the phenomenon of class. Its own position in the new society is not yet sufficiently assured to permit that degree of objectivity toward social processes which the bourgeoisie achieved a long time ago. Hence the significant hostility of radical "New Dealers" and other representatives of the technocratic stratum to Marxian concepts that at first sight seem quite innocuous from the standpoint, say, of an administration or technician with strong leanings in the direction of planning.[4] The notion that society groups itself into classes with significant social aims inevitably entails the thought that the intelligentsia must at some stage define its relationship to the working class which, in a planned economy, it will have to direct. Such thoughts are disturbing—and not only to "sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights." They point to the necessity of a socialist doctrine that will ultimately make sense to planners and planned alike. Far better to concentrate on problems of "social engineering" that by-pass the political issue.

For in the end the sociology of politics comes down to the simple question of who makes the relevant decisions, and in what form. Questions of this kind can never be wholly freed from the odium that attaches to politics. They touch too nearly upon the issue of power, and upon the function of those whose business it is to instruct the public but who more frequently are engaged in misleading both themselves and others. There is indeed no single simple conceptual apparatus that will enable us to sort out valid theories from spurious ones; but there are attitudes favorable to realism in sociology, just as there are others which make for aridity or "double-think." There is today great need for an analysis of the technocratic trend and its political implications, and it may be thought that such an analysis might come equally well from those who on the whole welcome this trend as from those who see only its dangers; but it will not come if sociologists shut themselves off from the political scene. What we need are not more learned disquisitions upon this or that aspect of Marx's or Max Weber's theories, but an attempt in the spirit of Marx and Weber to enter the new world of hierarchical organization, centralized planning, and monolithic political structures, of which the Communist regimes so far are the most extreme expression. In all probability we shall then find that the problems exhibited by the new absolutism are not totally irrelevant to our own society. □

[4] Similar tendencies have long been noticeable in the socialist movement: *vide* the longstanding refusal of the Webbs to accept the Marxian analysis of class. Characteristically, this reluctance disappeared when the Webbs had at last discovered a nominally socialist dictatorship with which, on account of its technocratic character and its successful emancipation from "proletarian" tendencies, they could identify themselves.

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Henry Pachter

The Right to Be Lazy

What the Lord did on the eighth day the Bible does not state; it is permitted to speculate that He continued to rest and, for all that the last million years' record shows, never returned to the hectic working spree of the first six days. And when, after another million years, He will be sitting gloriously on His throne, with angels leisurely winging around Him, He will behold His arrangement with satisfaction and say: All is as it should be. By definition, anyone who can offer Himself such a long vacation must be God; by the same token, the lesser breeds are eating their bread in the sweat of their brow. He will muse upon the sorry fate of the Devil, busily running the world, rushing hither and thither to aggrandize his little kingdom and really leading one hell of an existence. And He will take pity on the damned—Sisyphus rolling his stone uphill, Tantalus hopping for his apples, the Danaides pouring water into the bottomless barrel.

For it's labor that is Hell and leisure that is Paradise. Mankind knew that even when it was very young. We never got over that first and most effective of all curses which was the punishment for the first sin. The curse has worked well indeed; we still think it's a sin to revive that blissful state which existed before the Fall. But the wisdom of the people has never forgotten; it imagines Heaven as the absence of pain and effort; it exalts royalty ("The king was in the counting house . . .") as representatives of the gods on earth—clearly because leisure is the measure of distinction and pleasure is divine.

Anyway, the people have always been wiser than the textbooks; they never believed that wealth makes no man happy. Neither do they believe that riches are usually come by the hard way. Experience shows that the harder the work, the less the pay. The dirtiest jobs are not paid in proportion to the marginal "disutility" or distaste of their execution, but in accordance with the disrepute in which a person stooping to them is held by his equals and betters. Society may teach children that work never dishonors anybody, but when they grow up they would rather work less and receive higher honors.

This, Aristotle would say had he lived to see it, is as Nature would have it; for it is debatable whether those who do the menial work have a soul, whereas those who have leisure to enjoy the pleasures of life must of necessity have richer experience and a larger scope of soul. The more leisure the higher the rank on the social scale. On the other hand, the most effective slogan of revolutionary class hatred has been: he that does not toil neither shall he eat.

That terrible revolution did happen, though the exact time of its happening is not quite clear. Sociologists generally credit the Reformation with bringing about a complete change in people's attitudes toward work. Martin Luther, it will be remembered, rejected "good works," apparently because they interfere with works *tout court*, good or bad; he taught that the rich and mighty would go to heaven despite their bad works and the poor to hell for their good works; he also admonished the princes to keep the peasants in their place, and if failing, to quarter, wheelbreak, blind, whip, and hang them. An even gloomier chap was Calvin.

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When he governed Geneva he declared it a sin against God and a burden on the city's treasury if any man were idle; he sent the spiritual and terrestrial police into every household to make sure every man was working. He was one of the first churchmen to condone a modest amount of usury (by calling it interest; stinginess he called thrift, and hoarding—diligence). His defense of the usurer was echoed by that staunch churchman Mellon, who never foreclosed properties unless the tenants were "weakened by bad habits and extravagant living"—which unfortunately he found to be the case fairly regularly. Calvin never married and he forbade his followers all pleasures, luxuries, and, above all, idleness, which gives a man ideas. Before Freud he discovered that frustration can be converted into furious work. His friend Zwingli thought that "labor is a thing so godlike . . . in things of life, the laborer is most like to God."

Their later followers, however, found it difficult to persuade sensible men that this could be true, if only because the Catholics were having a good time and still expected God's forgiveness. Therefore they invented Calling. It is difficult to explain Calling if you can't say it's another word for work. Calling means work as a crusade; it means that a man has been identified with his work so intimately that his life no longer consists of hours of work and hours of play or rest: it is all work. If he does rest, it is to restore his energy for work; his recreation, too, must be usefully employed; his play must exercise his mental or physical powers. *Kraft durch Freude* was not invented by the Nazis; this mentality had been there all along waiting to be topped off with the usual German instinct for turning all-too-seriousness into ridicule. The Americans are only slightly behind the Germans; however, as is fitting, our example comes not from government propaganda but from commercial advertising. A maker of foam rubber tells us to "rest efficiently" on his mattresses. Now I like foam rubber and using it for rest should be a pleasure, but that ad man has spoiled it for me. If I feel that even in my sleep I am being efficient I don't enjoy it anymore.

Yet, even Calvin's universe had its rewards. In the first place, work was pleasing to God; then, to follow one's Calling brought recognition among men. Some people's Calling did not call them to great deeds, nor to great riches either; but just to fill one's place as ordained from on high. Doing one's job well was satisfaction in itself. Finally, a man could look with pride at his work. Whatever he did was completely his own and even if done in cooperation with others, he still had insight into the whole process. Our language has retained a reminiscence of this bliss: we still say "work" for both the act of creating and the product. By contrast, we say "labor" for the expenditure of human energy and for the supply of same. In the English language (and in none other, so far as I know), the word "job" can be set aside to name the social and economic relationship between the worker and his working place. Since language is prefabricated thought, a worker referring to his "job" is revealing a truth about modern society; he is "class-conscious." But if he naïvely says "my work," forgetting that he neither owns his product nor controls the process of its production, he atavistically uses conceptions from the craftsman's age. His parlance beclouds the fact that under the conditions of industrial capitalism the worker is separated from his product, first by a huge apparatus of machinery that does not belong to him, second by his contract that deprives him of the fruit of his labor, third by the market. All he knows is that for the time being he "has a job" requiring him to supply a specified amount of labor and to cooperate in the production of some merchandise his boss thinks he can sell. Usually he specializes in some phase of production and has very little insight into the whole process. He cannot possibly feel the satisfaction of an artisan looking at his work; he is not asked to be "creative" and has very little chance even to show ingenuity. All his pride is concen-

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trated on the work process, which he can speed up, even improve, but which never leads to any fulfillment or end.

The more efficient the worker is, *qua* worker, the greater his estrangement from his product. So much of it passes over his work bench; he boasts of his inventiveness in cutting corners, getting out more production in a given time, making more money to take home. The myth of Productivity has driven out the friendly gods of old. In their place we have enthroned the religion of efficiency. We love efficiency, paradoxically, for two reasons: it saves "labor," but on the other hand it makes working more efficient. If efficiency were used only to speed up our working hours and extend our leisure time, it would be all to the good. But this is not the case at all, or very rarely so. My hero in technology always was that attendant boy who was too lazy to turn by hand all the valves on Newcomen's first primitive steam engine; he connected the various faucets with rods which later were attached to the flywheel, and thus invented the feedback. This invention really was meant to save "work"; but when his employers later used it, they did so to save "labor." Now here is the paradox: as a human being, the worker should be glad that machinery was being invented to relieve him of (at least some of) the drudgery; as an employee he had to fight hard not to be relieved entirely by the machine. Under capitalistic conditions he had to fight on two fronts—on the one hand for his "right to work," on the other hand for his "right to leisure." Fortunately, both flies could be caught with the same swatter—the long history of class strife in the 19th century is the story of a gradual shortening of the working day. With this device, workers have assured themselves a place among human beings; they have won recognition for their desire to rest and play beyond the call of duty, while at the same time they have stretched the need for labor.

The price of better working conditions was the division of labor, or the acceptance of, and acquiescence in, the conditions of factory work by the worker, his integration into a huge organization of well-laid-out production processes, his subservience to the requirements of machine production. In this organization, the worker no longer has control over his product; at best, he may have control of his machine, but in most cases the machine will have control of him. Only the top management has control of production and the sales manager has control of the product. The worker often does not even see his product. When the first news of the atomic bomb was published, the most shocking revelation, to me, was not its enormous power of destruction, but the report that thousands of people had been employed in its production without knowing what they were doing. Here all the traditional notions of "workmanship," "pride in one's work," "calling," were voided of any meaning. Professional prowess no longer lies in "creativeness" nor in anything that refers to the product. The satisfaction is not in creating the product; it is in productivity. The worker is completely estranged from his product, and opinion research probing a little beneath the surface will reveal that workers love their machines but are indifferent to what they produce. (Foundations please take note; this is a really worthwhile project which also might be interesting to management.)

Marxist critics of capitalism first considered "alienation" as a purely economic estrangement of the worker from his product. No amount of worker participation will overcome this condition, for the simple reason that even under the most favorable conditions, the employers don't have control over the verdict of the market either. The condition, however, also is inherent in modern mass production as such; even an entirely state-controlled or cooperative enterprise cannot escape it. The remedy is trade union action which gets for the worker as much out of the proceeds as the market will carry

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—a remedy that does not remedy the situation, but makes it less obnoxious. The enterprise can give the worker a very decent or even a very high (monopolistic) wage and make working conditions for him really pleasant with Muzak, air-conditioning, coffee break, and other devices of "human engineering," all justified as conducive to higher efficiency, of course; still, we are even more deeply entangled in the basic contradiction—that work and leisure are two very different things; the devices of personnel management only help to underline the basic fact that labor is measured by its disutility to the worker, that he strives to exert himself less, to spend less time inside the factory, has no pride in his work and gets little satisfaction out of a job well done—except perhaps the promotion which enables him to spend more time outside the factory and enjoy it better. This condition transcends capitalism; it is characteristic of all industrial societies, including a socialist economy based on industrial production. Isn't it significant that travelers to Utopia usually find themselves in garden cities suggesting a preindustrialist society?

All the devices of human engineering and personnel relations are just so many acknowledgments of the fact that work generally is unpleasant, that office hours are a nuisance, and work discipline is degrading. This unpleasantness is overcome by morale-building ideologies, such as "work ennobles the worker," "common interest goes before self-interest," "duty before pleasure," "there is a war on." Sportsmanlike nations can be persuaded to stage productivity competitions, warlike nations can be asked to outproduce the enemy. Totalitarian governments particularly have developed techniques of combining war ideology with racing images; they constantly organize battles of the grain, battles of production, battles of the cradle, etc. Failure to increase production unfailingly results in a charge of "sabotage," but the most potent device of totalitarian imposition is the myth of Productivity which persuades the worker that his job is his duty, and that Duty, or one's job, stands higher in the hierarchy of values than one's personal needs.

At best, such verbalizations are the results of utter confusion; when the philosphers speak of *homo faber,* they mean the inventor, the creator, the playful explorer, the craftsman perhaps, but never the industrial worker. Man is free and creative only when he plays; he transcends himself only when his work serves no purpose; he fulfills himself only when he has no "job" to do. He develops his personality only when he throws off the thraldom of labor. He creates "works" only where he is not in the position of a "worker." The nihilistic, fascist ideologist Ernst Jünger went as far as to "suggest the question, whether workers are not of a third sex"; a robot need not be human.

That workers are people was most forcefully asserted by Marx's son-in-law, Paul Lafargue, in his slogan "The Right to be Lazy." His pamphlet under this title tells the story of a hundred years' fight for shorter hours; but there was more to it. Lafargue (a West Indian mulatto) had not been brought up in the Calvinist virtues and did not believe in the pseudo-socialist philosphy that work alone redeems man from this vale of miseries. He felt that man needed very much to be redeemed from the obligation to work, and saw that industrial machinery might help him to get rid of the drudgery. Much as he welcomed this opportunity, he also saw the danger of man's enslavement by the machines. The bold speculations of his eminent father-in-law on the all-pervasiveness of labor made him uneasy; he did not deny that socialists should fight for "the right to work," but he was not so sure that they also should fight for the duty to work. To him, it was just as important to fight for the right not to work. He was a brave man who truly believed in freedom, and when he felt that his life had been played out, he allowed no duty to retain him; he quit, even in his last action

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asserting a man's right to take his life into his own hands.

Lafargue was 30 years younger than Marx, and in the meantime two more generations have passed. To say that I disagree with Marx amounts to saying that today I can see where Marx was a child of his age. He believed in work as man's salvation from exploitation. His enemies were the leisure classes which were monopolizing consumption. The streak of the Jewish prophet and chiliast in Marx blinded him to the virtues of luxury and pleasure; his own life was that of a zealot; he poked fun at Lassalle's suggestion that the workers ought to increase their desiderata. So deeply was he steeped in the idea of productivity that he even proposed labor service, and his idea of progressive education was to merge the factories with the schoolroom. Marx was a Victorian gentleman and a Prussian scholar, besides being an Apostle of Justice; in neither capacity did he understand the workers. He had made himself such a high image of the ideal proletarian (with arms growing thinner and fists erected higher) that the specimens whom he met in real life usually annoyed him. Philosophical materialist that he was, he liked them best when they were least concerned with the good life; and he honestly expected them to sacrifice their consumer interests to the beauties of the socialist society of pure producers.

Under the conditions of capitalism, the worker tries to welsh on his contract and delivers less labor than he is expected to; the employer, on the other hand, holds the union responsible for the delivery of an honest day's work. Under state socialism or state capitalism, the worker's interest in his "job" is supposed to wax to enthusiastic proportions; it's "his" state he is working for and the benefit is supposed to accrue to all. As a consumer and taxpayer, the worker certainly should tell himself, as his own employee, to work harder; but unless he develops a split personality it does not happen that way. His participation in management is only vicarious; he may be his own boss in the abstract; but this abstract personality confronts him in the alienated shape of a supervisor, and the conflict can be resolved only by institutionalizing the split of personality—free trade unions must bargain as his representatives (*qua* worker) with management as his representative (*qua* consumer). Management still will insist on labor-saving devices to cut costs, while the union will ask for work-saving devices even if they are costly. This applies notably to jobs which are dirty and demand great exertions but give little or no satisfaction psychologically.

I simply do not believe that "socialist conscience" will drive anybody to volunteer for the job of groundhog, digging a tunnel under the Hudson River. Lowly jobs can be filled only by one of four devices: higher wages; special honors and/or some sense of adventure that may be connected with them; labor service or some other form of forced labor; finally, the presence of a lower class or race whose members are prevented from rising to better positions. I reject the last two and consider the second as too rare to be generalized. Groundhogs must be paid higher wages or given longer vacations after the first enthusiasm of exerting themselves for their own government has worn off. The same, however, though less drastically demonstrable, is true of all government efforts to increase productivity. A socialist government wishing to stay clear of compulsion must recognize the freedom of trade unions and cooperatives. I cannot imagine a socialist society in which all is eternal harmony; least of all can I accept the ideal of a docile labor force, bent on furiously fulfilling its duty toward the socialist fatherland and enthusiastically improving its productivity. If capitalism were to be criticized only because it is wasteful and inefficient, I would have little quarrel with it; but it is wasteful with human happiness and economical only with material goods. I expect socialism to be rather wasteful with material resources but thrifty with unpleasantness imposed on human beings. The most efficient, i.e., cost-

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saving, economical way of producing merchandise may not always be the best from the standpoint of the worker's comfort. Our technology has advanced efficiency to provide for everybody; we can well afford to be inefficient wherever it suits us better. There was a time when "monopolies" were accused of sabotaging technological progress for the sake of profit. Today, automation is precipitating a new industrial revolution before society has made the necessary adjustments to use the new efficiency for the benefit of all mankind. We have become slaves of Progress; we have not dared to stop the development of atomic power as long as the nations cannot agree on disarmament. Marx was right against the Luddites: industrialism and capitalism could not be arrested but had to be digested. The automation, however, is right against Marx, and we have not digested its implications yet. The age of the robot is here; mankind can sit back and relax; the need for efficiency no longer worries us; productivity no longer is the measure of human contribution to the process of production; our needs can be filled by pushbutton operations.

Our problem is rather to increase our ability to enjoy our leisure time. We need to develop our creative ranges of play; we need to learn what it means to be free from the drudgery of work. Up to now our play has been modeled after the image of our work; even in consuming we maintained producer attitudes, or even worse—the dull and dutiful attitudes of factory work. We have to forget, to unlearn the producer attitudes; we have to renounce efficiency and productivity as human attributes. We have to insist on our right to be lazy and just human.

Indeed, why efficiency? It is generally agreed that socialism will be a very cumbersome way of providing administration and planning. If we admit, with Engels, that the cook ought to have a go at ruling the state, I am afraid we shall not only eat less well but also have more serious reasons to gripe (by the way, I think this is absolutely necessary and healthy; people under socialism must have some outlet for their natural aggressiveness). If we rotate labor from town to country, from manual to clerical, from executing to executive, out goes the expert and the efficiency. Not that I believe in these silly devices; I only refer to them for two purposes: first, to show that even the fathers of socialist thought, who introduced them, must have been aware that socialism is not a way to organize society more efficiently. Second, they show how much they were aware of the problem of human values which I am discussing here. But in those days they could only think of making work more "humane"; they had to organize their ideas of socialism around man the producer. It was only natural that they had to come to contradictory conclusions. I suspect it might even be shown that the idea of totalitarian dictatorship is inherent in their conception of productivity. Now we can make the Copernican turn: not by thinking of better devices of organizing *homo faber* shall we liberate him from the realm of necessity, but resolutely acknowledging his human ability to enjoy life and to act creatively in purposeless play.

Once labor has been recognized as something to get away from and leisure has been recognized as the legitimate and significant sphere of human endeavors, we even might expect those psychological changes which are just utopian dreams in the classical theory of socialism. The founding fathers all imagined that socialist production habits would create community spirit and other virtues which would prevent the recurrence of acquisitiveness and of war. There was neither proof in theory for such possibilities, nor did experiment bear these hopes out, except where communities were founded on a strictly religious basis. If we succeed, however, in substituting a religion of laziness for the worship of industriousness, the acquisitive instincts, while they still cannot be killed, might find no cultural and social nourishment and no economic sphere in which they could become active. Indeed, Fourier's paranoiac conjecture of a new animal might for the first time be rationally discussed. Those who might find some of his suggestions strange are asked to consider that he believed in play, too. □

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Harold Rosenberg

Marxism: Criticism and/or Action

We have to go back to the witch doctors or the Shakespeare of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* to reach a world in which specters, abstract beings, names come to life, "objective powers" play so large a part as they do in the world of Marx—from that "mysterious thing," the commodity, which floats in the shadow of the physical products of modern industry, to those "personifications of economic relations," the social classes, which, according to *Capital,* are the protagonists of the political-economic drama. Each of these entities, in one of Marx's most characteristic phrases, "takes on an independent existence over [and] against the individuals" and dominates human behavior.

It is these entities, these "objective powers," that supply both the actors and the props on the stage of history. Living men and women—magically bound to their service, as Caliban by the wand of Prospero—act but to effect *their* ends. Even the hero, Marx takes pains to demonstrate, while imagining that he follows his own will, actually sustains in his thought and feeling the mode of life, the limits and half-conscious purposes of a collective person, the class which has chosen him; and he is lifted or cast down according to its condition.

With Marx, of course, these incorporeal figures and powers have not migrated into the human sphere from nature or the supernatural; they are the offspring of men's own activities, and precisely of the most practical. They are concretions of behavior as it has been given its shape within the social whole; phantom though they are, they are inseparable from human reality. For instance, a social class for Marx is an "illusory community," but it arises from and embodies the most basic relations, the "materialist connection of men with one another." A class is composed entirely of alter egos, since individuals "belong to it only as average individuals" and not as unique persons; yet this community of doubles is the individual's exclusive ground of self-realization. For Marx the ruling principle of civilized life is metamorphosis, in which nothing is real except in its transfictional state.

We hesitate to call "myth" this system of constructs that are not merely mental but the specific forms of the human world. "The difference," says Marx, "between the individual as person and what is accidental to him is not a conceptual difference but a historical fact. This distinction has a different significance at different times." Nevertheless, we cannot avoid speaking of these changing creations in metaphors of the imaginary. In history, as in the dream, past actions become incarnated and continue to incarnate themselves in effigies of living events. The present is displaced by these residues; and this deprivation of immediate, waking time is the common anguish. Our acts as soldiers, as mechanics, as radical critics, encase us as if they molded themselves in clay or metal upon our bodies. The tyranny of the done causes our very skills to betray us, like that

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knife-thrower of de Maupassant, so perfect a performer he could not miss his target even when he wanted to. Man makes himself against himself. *"Le mort saisit le vif,"* Marx quotes in the Preface to *Capital.* But it is not only the survival of anachronisms that he wishes to combat.

Marx is not slow to celebrate the tremendous physical onslaught of capitalism against all traditional forms and institutions, as well as the scientific criticism it has applied to ancient superstitions.

> Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify.

The single individual has emerged and has declared his independence, claiming his association with others to be the result of a free contract.

Capitalism, however, has not broken the siege of the past upon the present. It has banished religious fetishes only to succumb to *a process of fetish-making* of its own. Bourgeois society itself was born out of myth, explains *The Eighteenth Brumaire;* the revolutions that brought it into being summoned up personages, costumes, and rhetoric out of long-vanished epochs. Most important, it has established as its essential activity the conversion of living, human energy into spectral force—for to Marx that is just what *capital* is, a quasi thing incorporating the past actions of men and women and able to control what they do now. "In bourgeois society, living labor is but a means to increase accumulated labor . . . in bourgeois society therefore the past dominates the present." Folded in the center of capitalist dynamics Marx detected a stasis in which completed being embodied itself continually.

It is toward this motionless center from which emanate, like steam from a crack, the Delphic wraiths of capitalism that *Capital* directs its tremendously detailed, systematic analysis. Assuming in the form of capital a fierce mechanical vitality, the dead labor of men extends in every direction a web of abstract entities that change the world as if in obedience to a will of their own. Marx's major work attempts to translate these magical excrescences back into their human matter. Behind the system of "independent existents"—the commodity, money, the market —it exposes the processes by which expended labor is converted into the economic plasma which is the source of capitalist vigor and outlines the drama of class coercion, spiritual poverty, and revolt that accompanies that conversion. The bias for this exposure is Marx's unlimited hostility to mystification and his stubborn belief in the immediate possibility of a society in which, as in the communism described in *The German Ideology,* it will be "impossible that anything shall exist independently of individuals, in so far as things are only a product of the preceding intercourse of the individuals themselves."

Since the effigies of the unalive rule both inside the mind and in the physical organization of society, humanity can be free only if their independent existence, and with it their superhuman power, is destroyed in both. All criticism, Marx had written early, is criticism of religion, and criticism and revolution complement each other. By demonstrating how capital, the commodity, property, are in actuality frozen human acts and relations, criticism dissolves these deities in the consciousness and makes them contingent on the history of classes. In turn, by demonstrating how social classes are actually compounded out of changing modes of producing subsistence, criticism destroys the illusory independence of these collective egos and makes them contingent on economic behavior and the material world. The evolution of class struggles, Marx wrote to Wedemeyer in

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1852, had been described by others before him, as well as the economic physiology of classes: his own contribution, he said, rested on three propositions, the first of which was: "that the existence of classes was tied up with certain phases of material production." Inside the economic system operates the human drama of class compulsion and resistance; while inside the bodies of the classes circulate the routines by which real men keep themselves alive. This double unmasking, peeling abstraction from abstraction in order to reach the facts from which all abstractions have grown, is the innovation of materialist criticism. In everything "the root is man."

For Marx's dialectics, history itself is an unmasking: the uncovering of reality takes place not in the mind alone but through an actual corporeal stripping of the social and historical "integument"—another characteristic expression—which makes the human fact what it is. History is like the tragedy of the Greeks: behind the fact presented on the stage there exists the hidden fact, which is coming out and will be recognized through its inevitable enactment. Without the tragic enactment, criticism is only an opinion. By itself, without a change in the situation, it can never win lasting conviction, for the "unreal" fact stands forth to deny it. Since the source of social myth is the real relations of society, the mere critic of existing forms is doomed to be the hero of a fable of frustration. Every image the exasperated modern Tiresias laboriously scrapes from the brain of his auditors is restored without delay by the factories and streets. If criticism is not to be an end in itself, it must be a means to put an end to those material conditions from which the mirage is bred—"those conditions whose life-principle has already been refuted" but which survive nevertheless as a fetter upon life. "In themselves," Marx complains with a note of the boredom of the philosopher with the lag of existence, "they are not sufficiently worthy of attention but are a state of fact both despicable and despised." The aim of materialist analysis is not to continue an endless practice of unveiling particular examples of animated death but to help eliminate all of them by laying bare to a stroke of force their common social cause.

CRITICISM, FOR MARX, is an action. More exactly, it is the beginning of an action; one that demands completion by social transformation. It is in regard to the latter phase of attack upon the myth content of civilized life, the part that has to be carried out by others than the critic, that the great practical problems of Marx's thought arise, including those of its strategy and its ethics—and with these the related questions of the revolutionary roles of the individual, the political party, and the social class.

For Marx the assault of criticism upon the "objective powers" is to be made effective by the revolution of a class, the proletariat. If Christian philosophy differs from pagan philosophies in that it centers upon a unique event of the past, the Crucifixion, Marx's historical materialism differs similarly in that it centers on a future event, the victory of the working class. In the letter to Wedemeyer cited above, Marx enumerates two innovations of his thought in addition to his explanation of classes: (1) the idea of the *necessary* conquest of power by the proletariat, and (2) the idea of the function of proletarian power in ending the class struggle by bringing to life a society of free individuals. At the heart of Marxism is its contention that its criticism and the revolutionary action of the working class have the identical objective, revolution by the second being the material equivalent of the first and supplying its positive social content. This daring concept, whatever its scientific validity, is a precondition for thinking as a Marxist.

Was the correspondence between materialist analysis and working-class accession to power to be the result of the adoption by a

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decisive number of individual workingmen of Marx's theories? The answer is, definitely, no. Apart from his contempt for ideologists and utopians, including "Marxists," who see in ideas the cause of historical happenings, Marx's entire perspective excludes the notion that a historical effect can originate with an individual or an association of individuals. The conqueror of classes and of class struggle had to be one of history's collective pseudo organisms, a class. The action of the proletariat that would parallel materialist criticism was to be self-motivated as a necessary result both of the nature of the proletariat and of the objective stimuli of its revolt.

To qualify the working class for its metacritical role, Marx evoked the negative process of capitalism which, in denuding the proletarians of illusory being, must cause their revolutionary action to come forth as an accurate expression of their situation and to guide them with ever-deepening clarity. The factory laborers are uniquely endowed with the possibility of attaining to the real by the utter worthlessness of their daily actions in conferring individuality upon them. They exist as an embodiment of generality. If all men belong to their respective classes only as "average individuals," with the proletarian, then, "average" is the whole of what he is. His time span is a wage rate, his product not a "work" with character but an interchangeable commodity.

Thus in the modern worker the difference between the individual person and his class has been suppressed, and with it the illusory nature of both. Members of all other historical classes, split by the division of labor, have achieved their real existence in the masquerade of types compounded by society out of their activities of yesterday. In the proletariat, capitalism has created the very personification of self-loss through social behavior—those "newfangled men," as Marx called them, who, like the machine, are "an invention of modern times" and are multiplied automatically with the accumulation of capital. With the worker, the social process of appropriating the individual's past and using it to dominate his present has been carried to its extreme. Since his work assumes the form of capital which is taken away from him, he is constantly drained of his "life content"; his acts produce no accretion of individuality, not even an illusory one. On the contrary, the products which are the substance of his being are in their transmuted form applied only to extract more labor from him.[1] Wrung dry on this wheel of both his past time and his living time, of both memory and imagination, the worker exists as an "abstract individual."

But by the very fact that the workingmen are through their activities constantly rendered into human nothings, Marx sees them as "put into a position to enter into relations with another as *individuals*" (his emphasis), to act together in the daylight of genuine self-interest. No past, personal or class, no socially constructed self, stands between the factory worker and his fellows, or between his sense of community and the reality on which it is based. If he begins to act for himself, his act will be a genuine self-expression, at the same time that it will be an act for all. "Only the proletariat of the present day, who are completely shut off from all self-activity, are in a position to achieve a complete and no longer restricted self-activity."

But the workers cannot act for themselves without breaking the social mechanism which transforms their acts and siphons them off as capital, that is, without a revolution against the ultimate source of modern hallucination. Hence the choice stated by Marx—"The working class is either revolutionary or it is nothing"—is at the same time the formula both for his own critique of capitalism as a specific epoch in the history of human alienation and for the impulse of the workers to

[1] *Capital,* in describing this process, resorts to melodramatic language: "Capital is dead labor, that vampire-like only lives by sucking living labor, and lives the more the more labor it sucks."

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revolution as a revulsion against the void within them. Whenever a crisis of capitalism reproduces the vacuity of the proletariat as physical hunger and the direct threat of death, the *final* revolution is the order of the day.

By his revolutionary action the worker starts a psychic increment that makes him an individual; he arrives, as Rosa Luxemburg emphasized, at ethical existence. The appearance of this class upon the stage of history brings new persons into the world (not molecules of a mass), whose characters are derived from the single social activity that cannot harden into a thing, from revolution. The restoration of alienated labor would destroy these persons, in destroying their freedom, hence the condition of their survival is the "revolution in permanence." The new existence of the workingmen itself depends on their day-by-day triumph over surplus value as a social force against each; and this victorious existence, constantly augmenting individuality, is itself socialism and the "transition to the abolition of all classes."

For Marx, therefore, the socialist revolution is immanent in the nature of the proletarian class and the need of its components to achieve individuality. On the other hand, individuals, *apart from their intellectual struggle against mystification,* have no deciding role in the historical drama; their free action as such can begin only *at the end of* history and with the vanishing of classes.

Materialist criticism is the revolutionary action of the individual; revolutionary activity is the materialist criticism of the working class. Marx's conviction of the interrelation and the inevitable synchronization of these two processes constitutes the key to his politics and assigns to individuals and to classes their different roles in it. The communists, whether consisting exclusively of Marx and Engels, or of an association that multiplies the Marxian voice, were not, according to *The Communist Manifesto,* to form a separate group competing with other working-class parties for control of proletarian action. Their revolutionary function was to carry on the double unmasking of materialist criticism: "In all political movements they bring to the front as the leading question in each the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time," showing changes in the relations of production to be at once the means and the end of the transformation of society. Conversely, in all social and economic questions they expose the content of class coercion and struggle. Taking for granted the proletariat's growing organization, cohesion, and will to combat, spontaneously brought about by the processes of capitalist production, Marxian criticism would act upon the proletarian revolution in two ways: (1) as the "head of passion" it would help change instinctive action into conscious action by bringing before the workingmen the formulation of their position and of their experience as a class; (2) as the irreconcilable challenge of the mind to mystification, it would provide a model of suspicion and hostility toward bourgeois society and act as a sentry for the class of workingmen against delusions through which they might be used as a tool to defeat their own interests. (See Marx's letter to Bolte.)

SO LONG AS it assumes that it is operating in the presence of rising proletarian revolt, Marxian criticism is an action that remains criticism. Where, however, its intellectual attack against society no longer takes for granted the parallel movement of the victim class, a terrifying confusion besets Marxism, particularly with regard to historical roles of individuals and classes. Its political concepts and social values become ambiguous, or even appear in reverse. Personalities, parties, ideas all at once become prodigies of history-making, and responsible day by day for the destiny of man.

In theory unwavering as to the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat, Marx was not

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tempted to put criticism into a position inferior to action. For him the plot of history was given, including its denouement. The process by which labor is converted into capital also holds the secret of capitalism's future wreck: using its transportable energy, capital, it continually augments both the class of wage-workers and the productive power of labor by creating a constantly widening interplay of men and tools—at the same time that, through the accumulation and centralization of wealth, it narrows the slit through which this growing force must pass in order to be changed into capital. An ever-mounting pressure, ever more closely confined—which is reflected in the tensions of the classes, their preparations, their strategies. In the explosion that is inevitable, unless truly popular forces create the means for bringing about socialization by stages, the cave of illusions vanishes and labor is left in the open air of free cooperation among individuals.

This prediction, that capitalism must automatically develop the elements of the society that will supersede it, presents, of course, the famous "contradiction" in Marx between the inevitability of socialism and the call to revolution. It is pragmatism, however, not Marx that sees the historical protagonists as free individuals needing the stimulation of an undetermined end in order to strive for a social form that they have chosen. In Marx's own terms, which allow for no point of individual contemplation and decision outside the drama of history, the so-called contradiction is meaningless. If the "higher powers" that combat each other existed entirely separate from us, we could passively await their self-destruction. If, on the other hand, they were mere images, analysis could dissolve them like the superstitions left over from dead societies. Since, however, classes and their phantom by-products both control our behavior as external powers and live in us as ourselves, our lives *are* the actions we take with regard to them. We need no desired outcome to induce us to fight the class struggle—the struggle fights us. And if the Marxist critic wills the victory of the proletariat, it is not for the sake of the future of others but from the necessity of his own present thought. His intellectual effort is a resistance to the shapes of nightmare, a resistance which the conviction that waking is near does not weaken. History is the action of mass "I"s and the impulse being always present, passivity is as much a quality of the action of individuals as of their abstention from action. Even hesitation is an action, as in *Hamlet*; for Marx it is the typical action of the lower bourgeoisie, as the class pressed between classes, and the key to its destiny. By seeing great historical deeds as originating outside of us, Marx dissolves the aura of grandeur and irrationality responsible for revolutionary conceit.

Concentrating on the mass actors of the historical drama, Marx was not interested in the political choices of individuals but only in the accuracy with which their views and their acts mirrored the hidden movements of the social process—for instance, his well-known admiration of the royalist Balzac in contrast to his scorn for socialist litterateurs. The moral issue of individual adherence (and betrayal), which has taken on so much importance in conspiratorial Marxism, has no significance in Marx's conception of historical change; one looks in vain in his writings for reflections on the logos of individual, party, and class identification. When he himself takes part in organizational activities, it is exclusively as the promoter of his own conclusions. Nor, in the absence of such activities, does his work pause. The proletarian mass hero must wait for favorable conditions, including his own inner development. The critic need not wait: his exposures are the intellectual equivalent of the situation, as it happens to be and as the crisis will define it. Nowhere is there any hint in Marx of a wish to change himself or to add ethical density to his existence through revo-

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lutionary commitment. Since a man's intellectual products, like any others, stand against him as an alien force, Marx does not seek in his ideas a clarification of himself, and, as noted above, "Marxist" is to him a derogatory term. Communism could not be for him a school of self-effacement or of self-definition, and the meditation, to be or not to be a communist, is never addressed by him either to himself or to others.

With the loss of its metaphysical assurance, with the admission of doubt regarding the capacity of the proletariat and its destiny —a doubt upon which were founded both the absent-minded revisionist socialism of Bernstein and the elite activism of Lenin—the functions of Marxism as criticism and as action have split apart and entered into conflict with each other. For Marx, as we have seen, to expose the material realities cloaked in political concepts, mass movements, etc., is futile if no social force is being born to change them. But no sooner does Marxism itself turn into an ideology uniting the actions of individuals than it abandons its critical position and with it its dialectical relation to social transformation. The Party as the association of Marxian professionals stands as an independent power over and against both the class of laborers and its own individual members. The discontinuity of the proletariat, its rise from and relapse into nothingness, which is the pathetic basis of its experience of itself, as well as the impetus of its future freedom, is attacked by the whip of the Party leaders, for whom revolutionary politics exist as a thing. In place of resistance to deprivation being converted into political action through an expansion of self-consciousness, acceptance of the Party leaders' decisions by individual workers becomes the basis of working-class unity. With the lifeless discipline of the machine and the appropriation of his action extended into the political realm, the worker remains set fast in his abstractness, a personification of nullity with Marxist slogans as the ideal content of his mind. At the same time working-class revolt, since it is no longer a reflex of the worker's situation, ceases to serve as a revelation of the internal processes of society, so that revolutionary criticism is deprived of the data by which to correct itself. The Party as idea and as past becomes fixed in the revolutionist as his illusory character. From being a repulse of the unreal, revolution becomes a surrender to a fetishism of the act—an equivalent to those other forms of vertigo in which products of the human brain and previous human relations appear as endowed with vitality and engaged in transactions with the human race. The Party (and its foes) now appears infinitely active, while the individual communist and the working class repeatedly collapse into apathy. Needless to add, the critical activities of individuals, the only historical initiative possible to them as such, are put to sleep. For all their claims to manipulating the gears of history, and despite their tactics of ubiquitous "activation," modern revolutionary parties actually promote an enormous passivity.

MARXISM IS UNTHINKABLE apart from its premise of proletarian victory and its all-liberating effects. It is a philosophy suspended upon an event, a monologue in the drama of history which only the action of its mass hero can save from being a soliloquy. Its human content, the future that it desires, is to be found not in its own formulas but in the liveliness of the huge shadow by its side: "The great social measure of the Commune," said Marx in *The Civil War in France,* "was its own working existence."

No one is a Marxist who does not anticipate the proletarian transformation of society and strive to bring it about as the means for putting the demons to flight. Contrariwise, no one is a Marxist who, in the presumed interest of working-class liberation, consents to serve the powers of a new otherworld. If Marx's proletarian solution to alienation turns out to be a mirage, if this promise in his thought must be canceled, Marxism is dead, however possible it may still be to discover

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in his conception clues for novel strategies of power resting upon an apathetic proletariat (e.g., neo-Bolshevism). But Marxism or not, what remains valid in Marx's analysis is the negative force of its example in persistent social unmasking, precisely the force of which hallucinatory communism deprives it. Moreover, the systematic indication in Marx's writings, though from the point of view of Marx himself they cannot overcome the impotence of mere criticism, has by no means lost its pertinence so long as the processes that produce a proletariat continue to operate; under these circumstances it may even be indispensable for an understanding of the situation presented by proletarian *nonaction*. The consequence of the failure of the proletariat in the face of the advancing socialization of production could, for Marx, be nothing else than "barbarism," the proliferation of a modern Darkest Africa of unreal beings, sacred apparitions, secular cults, illusory unions. Will anyone deny that the bad dream and farce have become commonplaces of public life, to say nothing of the private? And is it necessary to prove that these phenomena relate to that process of depersonalization through one's calling described as "poletarianization"? With the expanding social appropriation of work in all fields, with private accumulation increasingly rare, particularly in the more dynamic industrial nations, with the growing dependence of the individual and his attendant inner isolation, the condition of the factory worker has, regardless of occupational statistics, become more and more the rule throughout society. Abstract man multiplies; a progressive flattening of personality takes place, irrespective of salary categories, standards of living, bureaucratic rank. Demoralized by their strangeness to themselves and by their lack of control over their relations with others, members of every class yield themselves to artificially constructed mass egos that promise to restore their link with the past and the future. Instead of the self-creating revolt of nothings at the base of society, history appears to hold out a horror utopia of universal deindividualization headed by leaders who *are* their masks. Within this half-formed world of real specters, Marx's criticism of modern industrial society, centered on the proletarian void, offers at least a conceptual foothold. The weapon of criticism is doubtless inadequate. Who on that account would choose to surrender it? □

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Daniel Bell

Work, Alienation, and Social Control

In recent years there has arisen a sophistication which understands that the abolition of private property alone will not guarantee the end of exploitation. The problem has been posed as: how does one check bureaucracy? The problem is a real one. In socialist thought the "new" answer is to raise again the theme of "workers' control." This has shaped the demand for *comités d'entreprise* in France, for *Mitbestimmungsrecht* in Germany, and is emerging in Britain as the left-wing answer to the British Labour party's plan, "Industry and Society." It underlay, of course, the demand for workers' councils in Poland and Yugoslavia. I have no quarrel with the demand *per se,* but it is often difficult to know what the concept means.

In communist theory and discussion on this concept (apart from the opportunistic absorption of syndicalist ideas), the slogan of "workers' control" was conceived of almost entirely in *political* terms, as one of the means of undercutting the economic power of the employer class under capitalism, as a means *to* power, but not as a technique of democratization or the administration of industry *in* a socialist society.[1]

At the other extreme there were the detailed, imaginative, but unworkable blueprints pieced together by the medievalists, distributivists, and syndicalists who formed the guild socialist movement in Britain before and after World War I. The movement has been insufficiently appreciated, for the guild socialists wrestled, as did the earlier Fabians, with concrete problems of administration. Most of the questions which beset socialist and managerial societies today were anticipated and thrashed out in guild socialist debates. They were aware that nationalization of the means of production might result in the exploitation of the individual guilds by the state (e.g., the building of unwanted new investment at the expense of consumption or leisure, the setting of high work norms, etc.). On the other hand, syndicalism, or the ownership of production by the individual guilds, might lead to a separatism or "parochial imperialism" whereby a single guild might seek to benefit at the expense of others. The guildsmen "solved" the problem by vesting title to capital and land in the state, but leasing the property to the guilds at a rent (or interest) large enough

[1] See, for example, the explicit statement by Trotsky, the 1931 letter entitled *Ueber Arbeiterkontrolle der Produktion,* reprinted in the *New International,* May–June 1951, pp. 175–78. "For us," said Trotsky, "the concept of workers' control exists within the scope of a capitalist regime, under bourgeois domination. . . . [It] means a kind of economic dual power in the factory, banks, business enterprises, etc. . . . Thus a workers' control regime, by its very nature, can only be thought of as a provisional, transitional regime during the period of the shattering of the bourgeois state. . . ."

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to cover government expenses. Politically, the guild state was to be composed of a bicameral body, the one a geographical Parliament, the other made up of functional (i.e., vocational) representatives. The consumer, through Parliament, was to set the goals of production; the Council of Guild Representatives was responsible for the efficient conduct of industry. Each guild was to be a self-governing body, based on local councils; membership was to be open freely, but if jobs were unavailable the state was to support the waiting applicant until he could work. Each guild was to set its own condition of work—tempo, grievance procedures, etc. The guild would receive money in proportion to its membership but could distribute the shares in accordance with the wishes of the membership, either in equal shares or in differentials according to skills. In contrast to production, distribution was to be under the control of the state, with Parliament determining wage and price levels and the general level of new investment. Foreign trade, inevitably, would be a government monopoly. But ordinary forms of personal property, homes, autos, etc., would be left to the individual.

As a compromise between statism and syndicalism, guild socialism has given us many useful guides. Its weakness is that it sought to grapple with too many problems and that it set forth too detailed a blueprint. It was, paradoxically, too rational. Human societies cannot be made over *de nuovo*. One has to begin, pragmatically, with existing structures and with the character, temperament, and traditions—and desires—of the people concerned.

If the slogan of "workers' control" is raised, the simple starting point, perhaps, is to ask: workers' control over *what?* Control over the entire economy? This is unfeasible. A syndicalist society is too much a single-interest affair, which, if extended with its own bureaucracy, would simply substitute one form of interest domination for another. In a single industry, or enterprise? One can question, further, whether this, too, is a meaningful (realistic) concept.[2] The British TUC report, in 1932, on *The Control of Industry*—which accepted the public corporation rather than guild structure as the form of nationalized property, and joint consultation rather than syndicalist organization as the form of social control—was a hardheaded recognition of the limits of workers' control. And the new British Labour party program on "Industry and Society"—which extends the idea of social control through state ownership of shares in enterprises, although increasing the risk of a new "managerial" class society—is, in principle, a large step forward in creating "social accountability" of corporations to society,[3] though this is also the aim of workers' control.

The major confusion in the idea of workers' control, as it has been put forward by socialists and syndicalists, is that the word "control" has always had a double meaning: as direction (e.g., to control the course of an automobile) and as a check (e.g., to control someone's rage). Usually, in the debates

[2] Hannah Arendt, the keenest student of totalitarianism, and a sympathetic critic of the idea of workers' councils, writes apropos of the Hungarian and Polish experiences of 1957: ". . . it is quite doubtful whether the political principle of equality and self-rule can be applied to the economic sphere of life as well. It may be that ancient political theory, which held that economics, since it was bound up with the necessities of life, needed the rule of masters to function well, was not so wrong after all." For her extraordinary discussion of the meaning of the spontaneous emergence of workers' councils during the 1957 events, see her article "Totalitarian Imperialism," *Journal of Politics*, vol. xx, 1958, pp. 5–43.

[3] Even joint consultation, it should be pointed out, runs the risk of being a catchword. One can point out, wryly, that in practice joint consultation may simply become a "buck-passing" mechanism whereby each of the parties, managers as well as works council representatives, evades its own responsibilities. For a revealing picture of this, particularly for those who fear the specter of "managerialism," see the study by Elliott Jaques, *The Changing Culture of a Factory* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1951).

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on workers' control, the proponents have rarely singled out the different meanings. Roughly speaking, socialists have talked of workers' control to mean direction, management of an enterprise by the workers themselves, or the participation in management. This latter sense is the meaning of workers' control as it is being tried in Yugoslavia. The difficulty inherent in worker participation in management is that it tends to minimize the separate interest of workers from management, and to rob the workers of an independent status in the plant. Historically, the trade union has been a restrictive and protective organization, acting to defend workers' interests. Where the union has become an instrument to "control" the workers in the interest of national unity or for the state, workers have formed substitute bodies. This was the history of the shop stewards movement in Britain during World War I, of the workers' councils in Poland in October 1956. In Yugoslavia today the Communist party is in a dilemma. Because the workers have been brought into participation in management there seems to be no functional role for the union; and some theorists have gone so far as to say that the trade unions ought to be eliminated. In Britain, on the other hand, the unions in nationalized industries have consistently refused to participate on the boards of management or to take responsibility for production. The union continues to act as an independent, defensive institution vis-à-vis management.

Is there, then, no role at all for workers' control? If there is any meaning to the idea of workers' control, it is control—*in the shop*—over the things that directly affect his workaday life: the rhythms, pace, and demands of work; a voice in the setting of equitable standards of pay; a check on the demands of the hierarchy over him. These are perhaps "small" solutions to large problems, what Karl Popper has called "piecemeal technology"; but look where the eschatological visions have led!

Let us separate out two things that are crucial, I believe, in affecting the worker in the plant: one is the question of equity in treatment; the other is the impact of technology and an engineering culture on the work process itself.

By *equity,* a worker wants a situation in which no supervisor should have arbitrary or capricious power over him, and in which some channel exists whereby his own grievances find an impartial adjudication. And second, by equity, a worker wants to be assured that his wage, *relative to others in the plant or area,* is fair. The question of differentials in wages is a difficult one. In the past these differentials have been set by custom or by the supply-and-demand balances in the market. In recent years engineers have sought, through job evaluation schemes, to set up "impartial" intervals between classes of jobs. Often these have failed because the "ornery" workers refuse to believe that mechanical criteria, mechanically applied, constitute equity; and sometimes because "power" groups in a plant refuse to recognize a scheme which disadvantages them.[4] In the West, by and large, the functions of the unions (or of shop committees, since in Germany, for example, the unions deal with regional wage policies and have no roots in the shops) have been directed, with a large measure of success, to securing recognized standards of equity written into collective bargaining contracts. The principles of seniority, of arbitration and umpire procedures, of union determination of meth-

[4] For an interesting attempt to set an "objective" standard of pay differentials, see the article by Elliott Jaques in the *New Scientist,* London, July 3, 1958, p. 313. Jaques believes that by measuring the "time-span" which an individual has to perform jobs on his own initiative, without review, he is able to elicit "an unrecognized system of norms of what constitutes fair payment for any given level of work," and that these norms are "intuitively recognized by the people at work themselves." This would lead, says Jaques, to "an empirical basis for a national wages and salary policy."

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ods of sharing wage increases (e.g., through equal or across-the-board allocations, or through percentage increases), all attest to the victory of the workers' conception of equity, rather than the employers', in the matter of fair treatment in the plant.

But in the second aspect of control, in the challenge to the work process itself, the unions have failed. The most characteristic fact about the American factory worker today—and probably the worker in factories in other countries as well—is his lack of interest in work. Few individuals think of "the job" as a place to seek any fulfillment. There is quite often the camaraderie of the shop, the joking, gossip, and politicking of group life. But *work* itself, the daily tasks which the individual is called upon to perform, lacks any real challenge and is seen only as an irksome chore to be shirked, or to be finished as well as possible. Most workers, by and large, are not articulate about work. Questionnaires and surveys provide merely the muttered semiapprovals or disapprovals, the grudging assents, or the grunted displeasures that mask the "to-hell-with-it-all" attitude of the individual who feels his life space constricted.[5] But the behavior itself becomes a judgment. First and foremost, it appears in the constant evasion of thought about work, the obsessive reveries (often sexual) while on the job, the substitution of the glamor of leisure for the drudgeries of work. Yet the harsher aspects are present as well. It takes the form of crazy racings on the job or what the workers call the "make-out" game, i.e., the breakneck effort to fulfill one's quotas early in order to lounge for the rest of the hour or day (and it is striking to see how this pattern is recapitulated identically by the Soviet worker in his habit of "storming"), by the sullen war against production standards, and, most spectacularly, even if infrequently, by the eruption of "wildcat strikes." [6]

Contemporary sociology has come to the melancholy and defeatist conclusion that technology as "progress" cannot be reversed.[7] In a rational order one would *reduce* to as little time as possible the number of hours spent in irksome work, and then find respite in leisure. But is this the case? Can we not do something about the nature of the work process itself?

Actually the root of alienation lies *not* in the *machine*—as such romantics as William Morris or Friedrich Jünger were prone to say—but in the concept of *efficiency* that underlies the organization of the work process. The idea of efficiency dictates a breakdown of work and a flow of work in accordance with engineering rationality. It seeks to increase output by erasing any "waste"; and waste is defined as those moments of time which are not subject to the impersonal control of the work process itself. Central to the idea of efficiency is a notion

[5] Some sociologists deny that workers in a plant tend to be unhappy, and point to survey data—much of it collected by management—to show that the workers are fairly well satisfied with the job. The argument misses two essential points: first, there may be other aspects than work itself which provide some satisfaction, e.g., the clique or the group; and, second, no questionnaire on satisfaction is meaningful unless the worker is aware of alternative possibilities of work. (This, I suppose, is the meaning of the old saw: How can you keep them down on the farm once they've seen Paree? A farmer never having seen or known Paree may be satisfied with his lot; but is he, once he knows wider horizons?) My quarrel with industrial sociology—see my article "Adjusting Men to Machines," *Commentary*, July 1947, and my essay *Work and Its Discontents*—is that not only has industrial sociology accepted managerial biases in conceptualizing what is a problem (e.g., the idea of "restriction of output") but that it has failed to conceive of alternative methods of organization of work so as to provide real choices for a worker.

[6] The most comprehensive account of the effect of machine labor on human personality can be found in George Friedmann's *Où va le travail humain?* (Paris, 1951). Most of this is included in the translation by Harold Sheppard published in *Industrial Society* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1958). See, too, Alvin Gouldner, *Wildcat Strike* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Antioch Press, 1954).

[7] See David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), as a prime example.

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of measurement. Modern industry, in fact, began not with the factory—the factory has been known in ancient times—but with measurement. Through measurement we passed from the division of labor into the division of time. Through measurement, industry was able to establish a calculus of time and pay a worker on the basis of units of work performed. But the value of work itself could only be defined in terms of its cost to the user; and cost was—and is—conceived primarily in narrow market terms. Thus the psychological costs of indifference or neuroses, the social costs of road and transport, are charges all outside the interest and control of the enterprise. Thus such a consideration, for example, as the size of a factory is determined largely by the possibility of increasing output rather than by the costs involved in travel time for the worker, community crowding, etc. In these situations the human being is taken as one more variable in the process, and quite often a very subordinate one. Our emphasis has been on economic growth and increased output, but not on what kind of men are being molded by the work process. Even the recent vogue of "human relations" has been considered a justified cost to management in terms not of increasing satisfaction in work but of increasing output. The assumption has been made, of course, that if a worker is more satisfied he will increase his output. But what if the costs of satisfaction, involved in reorganizing the work process, mean a *decreased* output? What then? Which "variable" does one seek to maximize: the satisfaction of the work group or the productivity of the enterprise?

I have tried to spell out in some detail elsewhere the reasons why the cult of efficiency has been an unanalyzed assumption in the "logics" of modern industry.[8] Some of it is the result of a utilitarian rationality (one of the sources, too, for the practical British bent for seeing problems in "administrative" rather than ideological terms); and much is the result of early technological necessity since the nature of early steam power required the bunching of work. Once the goal of efficiency was established, however, the rationalization of work began; so, in Taylorism, we have the detailed breakdown of time, and with Gilbreth the economizing of motion.

In the United States, apart from questions of production standards, the unions have failed to challenge the organization of work. To do so would require a radical challenge to society as a whole: to question the location of industry or size of plant is not only to challenge managerial prerogatives, it is to question the logic of a consumption economy whose prime consideration is lower costs and increasing output. Moreover, how could any single enterprise, in a competitive situation, increase its costs by reorganizing the flow of work, without falling behind its competitors?

But this is not only a failing of "capitalist" society. In the socialist societies, sadly, there has been almost no imaginative attempt to think through the meaning of the work process. In Britain this has been, in part, the heritage of the Webbs and their own concept of efficiency (capitalism for them was waste and anarchic; socialism would be a "tidy" society). But of equal weight is the fact that, with outmoded machinery and in a falling world market, British society has been forced to think primarily of productivity in order to compete in the world markets. And who, today, would challenge the God of Productivity, if it might mean a lowered standard of living?

In Communist countries, where minority

[8] See my book *Work and Its Discontents* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956), for a discussion of the relation of efficiency to the concepts of rationality, and the necessary relationship of meaningful work to meaningful play and leisure. Shorter and variant versions are "Work in the Welfare Age," *L.P.E. Papers,* no. 4, (London) July 1956, and "Notes on Work," *Encounter,* (London) July 1954.

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dictatorship has sought to speed rapid industrialization, the effects on the workers have been even harsher. Lenin's solution for the disorganization of production, for example, in a famous speech in June 1919, was to introduce piecework and Taylorism, in order to discipline the workers![9] In the West, at least, where dehumanized work results in increasing productivity, the fruits of that productivity are shared with the workers. In the Communist countries, not only is work dehumanized but the social surplus through "primitive accumulation" goes to enhance the power of the state.

For underdeveloped countries, where living standards are pitifully low, it is difficult to talk of sacrificing production in order to make work more meaningful to the worker. Yet these are not nor should they be put in either/or terms. Engineers have learned that if efficiency considerations are pushed too far—if work is broken down into the most minute parts and made completely monotonous—they become self-defeating. The question is always one of "how much." But the question must be stated and placed in the forefront of considerations.

One need not accept the fatalism of the machine process—or create new utopias in automation—to see that changes are possible. These range from such large-scale changes as genuine decentralization, which brings work to the workers rather than transporting large masses of workers to the work place, to the relatively minute but important changes in the pace of work, such as extending job cycles, job enlargement, allowing natural rhythms of work.[10]

The specifics are there: what is needed is a change of fundamental attitude. If one is to say, for example, that the worker is not a commodity, then one should take the step of abolishing piecework and eliminating the distinction whereby one man gets paid on a weekly or annual salary, and another man is paid by the piece or the hour. If one accepts again the heritage of the old socialist and humanist tradition of worker protest, then the work place itself and not the market should be the center of determination of pace and tempo of work. The "flow of demand," to employ the sociological jargon, must come from the worker himself rather than from the constraints imposed from above. Even if costs were to rise, surely there is an important social gain in that the place where a man spends such a large part of his day becomes a place of meaning and satisfaction rather than of drudgery. Fifty years ago, few enterprises carried safety devices to protect workers' limbs and lives. Some protested that adoption of such devices would increase costs. Yet few firms today plead that they cannot "afford" to introduce safety devices. Is meaningfulness in work any less important? □

[9] "Scientific Management and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," *Collected Works,* vol. vii.

[10] See, for example, Charles R. Walker's *The Foreman on the Assembly Line* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1956), for a fascinating discussion of changes in time cycles and the effect on work.

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Nicola Chiaromonte

On Albert Camus

A man is dead: you think of his living face, of his gestures, his actions, and of moments you shared, trying to recapture an image that is dissolved forever. A writer is dead: you reflect upon his work, upon each book, upon the thread that ran through them all, upon their vital movement toward a deeper meaning; and you seek to form a judgment which takes account of the secret source from which they sprang and which is now stilled. But the picture of the man is not made up of the sum of your memories; nor the figure of the writer of the sum of his works. And one cannot discover the man through the writer, or the writer through the man. Everything is fragmentary, everything is incomplete, everything is the prey of mortality even when destiny seems to have granted both man and writer the gift of living to the limit of his forces, and of giving everything humanly possible, as in the case of Tolstoy. The story of a man is always incomplete; it is sufficient to think of what could have been different—almost everything—to know that his story can never contain the meaning of a human life, but only what that existence was permitted to be and to give. The truth was the living presence; and nothing can replace it. Immortality is an illusion for thought and art, as for man. They are nothing but relics mutely surviving time's erosion and history's disasters, like monuments of stone. But it is in this very fragility—which equates the humblest existence with the one that we falsely call "great" and is simply one that had the luck to express itself—that there lies the meaning and value of human life. And that value is eternal.

ALBERT CAMUS appeared in my life in April 1941, in Algiers, where I had come as a refugee from France. I met him soon after my arrival, for in Algeria he was famous: the leader of a group of young journalists, aspiring writers, students, friends of the Arabs, enemies of the local bourgeoisie and Pétain. They lived together, passed the days on the seashore or hillside, and the evening playing records and dancing, hoping for the victory of England and giving vent to their disgust with what had happened to France and to Europe. They also put on plays, and in that period were preparing a production of *Hamlet* in which Camus, in addition to directing, played the leading role opposite the Ophelia of his wife, Francine.

He had published a volume of prose poems entitled *Noces,* they told me. I did not read it, because in those days I was not in the mood for prose poems, but chiefly because the company of him and his friends was enough. In their midst I found the France I loved and the pure clear warmth of French friendship. I attended the rehearsals of *Hamlet,* went to the beach with them, took walks with them, talking about what was happening in the world. Hitler

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had just occupied Greece, and the swastika waived over the Acropolis. I suffered continual nausea and solitude in the face of these events. But solitary and shut off as I was, I was the guest of those young people. To know the value of hospitality one must have been alone and homeless.

I try to recall details, as if through them I could relive those days and learn something more about the young writer with whom I actually spoke little, since he felt no more like talking than I. I remember being totally obsessed by a single thought: we had arrived at humanity's zero hour and history was senseless; the only thing that made sense was that part of man which remained outside of history, alien and impervious to the whirlwind of events. If, indeed, such a part existed. This thought I considered my exclusive privilege; I felt that no one else could be so possessed by it, yet I yearned for someone to share it with. But there was no one. It was not an idea compatible with normal life, let alone with literature—or so it seemed to me.

However, I did have something in common with this twenty-eight-year-old writer—love of the sea, joy of the sea, ecstatic admiration of the sea. I discovered this one day when I was his guest at Oran and we went by bicycle beyond Mers-el-Kebir to a deserted beach. We spoke little even then, but we praised the sea, which does not have to be understood, which is inexhaustible and which never palls. All other beauty does, we agreed. This agreement sealed our friendship. Camus told me then that he was writing a tragedy about Caligula, and I tried to understand what could attract a modern writer to such a subject. Unfettered tyranny? But contemporary tyranny did not seem to me to have much in common with Caligula's.

From Oran I continued my journey to Casablanca from where I had been told I could embark for New York. I said good-bye to Camus and his wife, knowing that we had exchanged the gift of friendship. At the core of this friendship was something very precious, something unspoken and impersonal that made itself felt in the way they received me and in our way of being together. We had recognized in each other the mark of fate—which was, I believe, the ancient meaning of the encounter between stranger and host. I was being chased from Europe; they remained, exposed to the violence that had driven me out. I carried away with me the impression of a man who could be almost tenderly warm one moment and coolly reserved the next, and yet was constantly longing for friendship.

I SAW HIM AGAIN in New York in 1946 on the pier where I had gone to meet his ship. In my eyes he seemed to be like a man coming straight from the battlefield bearing its marks, pride and sorrow. By that time I had read *L'Étranger, Le Mythe de Sisyphe,* and *Caligula.* In those black years the young man from Algeria had fought and conquered. He had become, together with Jean-Paul Sartre, the symbol of a defeated France, which because of them had imposed itself victoriously in its chosen domain—intelligence. He had won his position on the stage of the world; he was famous; his books were brilliant. But to me he had conquered in a more important sense. He had faced the question which I considered crucial and which had so absorbed me during the days when I first met him. He had mastered it and carried it to extreme and lucid conclusions. He had succeeded in saying in his fevered way and in an argument as taut as a bow why, despite the fury and horror of history, man is an absolute; and he had indicated precisely where, according to him, this absolute lay: in the conscience, even if mute and stilled; in remaining true to one's self even when condemned by the gods to repeat over and over the same vain task. In this lay the value of *L'Étranger* and *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* for me.

With an almost monstrous richness of ideas and vigor of reasoning Sartre had said something similar. But when he arrived at

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the question of the connection between man and history today, between man and the choices which impose themselves today, Sartre seemed to have lost the thread of his reasoning, to have turned backward to realism, to categorical obligations imposed on man from the outside, and worse, to notions of the politically opportune. Camus held firm, at the risk of exposing himself, defenseless, to the criticism of the dialecticians, and of seeming to pass brusquely from logic to emotive affirmation. It is certain that what induced him to remain firm was not an ideological system, but the sentiment, so vehemently expressed in *L'Étranger* and in some pages of *Le Mythe de Sisyphe,* of the inviolable secret which is enclosed in every man's heart simply because he is "condemned to die." That is man's transcendence. That is man's transcendence in respect to history; that is the truth which no social imperative can erase. Desperate transcendence and truth, because they are challenged in the very heart of man, who knows that he is mortal and eternally guilty, with no recourse against destiny. Absurd, such transcendence and truth—but absurd as they were, they were reborn every time that Sisyphus descended "with heavy, but equal, steps, toward the torment whose end he would never approach. . . ." This secret, like the "eternal jewel" of Macbeth, can never be compromised or violated without sacrilege.

Albert Camus had known how to give form to this feeling and to remain true to it. Because of this, his presence added to everybody's world, making it more real and less insensate. And because of this, not of his fame, the young writer from Algeria has "grown" in my eyes, worthy not only of friendship but admiration. It was no longer a matter of literature, but of directly confronting the world. Literary space, that *trompe l'oeil* that had been invented in the nineteenth century to defend the individual artist's right to be indifferent, was broken. Camus (and, in his very different way, Sartre) by the simple act of raising the question of the value of existence, asserted the will to participate actively, in the first person, in the world; that is, to challenge directly the actual situation and contemporary man in the name of the exigency of a conscience whose rigor was not attenuated by pragmatic considerations. With this, one might say, he returned to the *raison d'être* of writing. Putting the world in question means putting one's self in question and abandoning the artist's traditional right to remain separate from his work—a pure creator. In the language of Camus this signifies that if the world is absurd, the artist must live immersed in the absurd, must carry the burden of it, and must seek to prove it *for the others.*

This was the real and the only valid meaning of *engagement.* Such a choice carried within itself the threat of the cancerous negation that Camus called nihilism. One had to go through the experience of nihilism and fight it. The simplest act of life is an act of affirmation; it is the acceptance of one's own and others' lives as the starting point of all thinking. But living by nihilism is living on bad faith, as a bourgeois lives on his income.

IN 1946 CAMUS was invited to speak to the students of Columbia University in New York. I have kept notes of his talk, and am sure I can reconstruct it without betraying his meaning. The gist of the speech was as follows:

> We were born at the beginning of the First World War. As adolescents we had the crisis of 1929; at twenty, Hitler. Then came the Ethiopian War, the Civil War in Spain, and Munich. These were the foundations of our education. Next came the Second World War, the defeat, and Hitler in our homes and cities. Born and bred in such a world, what did we believe in? Nothing. Nothing except the obstinate negation in which we were forced to close ourselves from the very beginning. The world in which we were called to exist was an absurd world, and there was no other in which we could take refuge.

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The world of culture was beautiful, but it was not real. And when we found ourselves face to face with Hitler's terror, what values could we oppose to negation, in what values could we take comfort? In none. If the problem had been the bankruptcy of a political ideology, or a system of government, it would have been simple enough. But what had happened came from the very root of man and society. There was no doubt about this, and it was confirmed day after day not so much by the behavior of the criminals but by that of the average man. The facts showed that men deserved what was happening to them. Their way of life had so little value; and the violence of the Hitlerian negation was in itself logical. But it was unbearable and we fought it.

Now that Hitler has gone, we know a certain number of things. The first is that the poison which impregnated Hitlerism has not been eliminated; it is present in each of us. Whoever today speaks of human existence in terms of power, efficiency, and "historical tasks" spreads it. He is an actual or potential assassin. For if the problem of man is reduced to any kind of "historical task," he is nothing but the raw material of history, and one can do anything one pleases with him. Another thing we have learned is that we cannot accept any optimistic conception of existence, any happy ending whatsoever. But if we believe that optimism is silly, we also know that pessimism about the action of man among his fellows is cowardly.

We opposed terror because it forces us to choose between murdering and being murdered; and it makes communication impossible. This is why we reject any ideology that claims control over all of human life.

It seems to me today that in this speech, which was a sort of autobiography, there were all the themes of Camus's later work, from *La Peste* to *Les Justes* to *L'Homme Révolté*. But in it there remained, discreetly in shadow, the other Camus, the one that I can call neither truer nor artistically superior, for he is simply "the other," jealously hidden in his secret being—the anguished, dark, misanthropic Camus whose yearning for human communication was perhaps even greater than that of the author of *La Peste;* the man who, in questioning the world, questioned himself, and by this testified to his own vocation. This is the Camus of the last pages of *L'Étranger,* and especially the Camus of *La Chute* in which we hear his deepest being, the self-tormenting tormentor speak, resisting all forms of complacency and moral self-satisfaction. He wrote, "I was persecuted by a ridiculous apprehension: one cannot die without having confessed all one's own lies . . . otherwise, be there one hidden untruth in a life, death would render it definitive . . . this absolute assassination of the truth gave me vertigo. . . ." With these words, it seems to me, the dialogue of Albert Camus with his contemporaries, truncated as it is by death, is nonetheless complete.

Translated by MIRIAM CHIAROMONTE □

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Paul Goodman

Notes on Decentralization

I. What Is Meant by Decentralization and What Is Not Meant

DECENTRALIZING is increasing the number of centers of decision-making and the number of initiators of policy; increasing the awareness by individuals of the whole function in which they are involved; and establishing as much face-to-face association with decision-makers as possible. People are directly engaged in the function.

Conversely, centralization is organization with top-down decision-making (on the basis of "upward communication"), departmentalization of the function, chain of command or bureaucracy, and maximum standardization of performance and procedure. People are personnel of the organization that performs the function.

Decentralization is not lack of order or organization but a different kind of coordination. Western science from 1500 to 1900 was entirely decentrally coordinated. In its high early period the free enterprise system of joint-stock companies was decentrally coordinated. The American political system of limited powers and checks and balances is decentralist in principle.

Many functions must be centralized by their nature: where there are no natural limits, or the function extends over the whole system, or the logistics is more important than the particulars—e.g., epidemic control, setting of standards, certain kinds of production and distribution, unification and scheduling of transportation. Also, in situations where force must be collected and directed to an emergency. At present we ought to centralize further in some functions: e.g., we ought to have modular standards and standard parts in building and in machinery. "Natural monopolies" like telephone-telegraph or railroads. And, internationally, where vast capital is required, as in the moon shot.

At present there is a strong trend to spontaneous decentralist political action—in the direct-action movements, and also some trend in cultural fields, like off-Broadway or Summerhill. But to decentralize, to delegate autonomy to many centers, can also be a political decision of a central power, usually compelled by the fact that the centralization is not working. For example, the New York City Board of Education is experimenting with decentralizing.

In the present period decentralized centers need not be narrow, isolated, or "provincial." We exist in a posturban, postmass communication, postcentralist period. The decentralist kibbutzim might, by some, be considered as fanatical but hardly as provincial.

The fact of great populations does not prevent decentralization. Decentralizing is primarily a question of sociological organ-

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ization rather than geographical dispersal, though that is sometimes involved. In a big city the organization of arrondissements with neighborhood city halls can importantly decentralize. A big university should be run by its many faculties.

Decentralizing is largely an empirical question and requires research and experiment (which it is not getting). The maxim of decentralization is to decentralize where, how much, and how it is expedient. For example, a gang or collective contract is used in important assembly-line manufacture in Coventry, whereby the gang determines its own working schedule, persons, and operations. In what industries in the U.S. is this feasible? How should it be tailored?

II. Present Excessive Centralization

IN SOME ASPECTS of social organization there is historically a discernible cyclical swing between excessive centralization and excessive decentralization. Within the nation-states at present there is, in most major functions, excessive centralization or centralism on wrong principles (just as internationally there is decentralization on wrong principles). Our emphasis ought to begin to be the other way.

Our present overdeveloped centralism goes back to a bureaucratic style perfected in the 18th century for taxation and policing; a military style developed with the emergence of the nation-states for logistics and to wage war; an economic style dominated by abstract money-profits rather than specific uses and work processes; and —to a lesser degree—a style of industry determined by large concentrations of machinery around steam prime-movers, cash-cropping, and enclosures.

These have produced overcapitalized and often inappropriate technology, an inflexible and insecure tightly interlocking economy, ignorant mass consumption with a complicated standard of living of inferior quality, the development of sprawling urban areas rather than towns and cities, brain-washing mass communications, mass democracy without real content, and mass education that is both wasteful and regimenting.

With these there is a prevalent superstition that no other method of organization could be more efficient or is even possible, and that in all functions the reasonable mode of operation is by "rationalization" (subdivision, standardization, cash-accounting). Because of the superstition and the inflexible organization, these beliefs are self-proving. No other kind of operation or administration is paid attention or subsidized; no research is done into possibilities of decentralizing. Breakdowns in the centralizing system are handled not by examining the system but by patchwork or imposing new levels of control according to the same administrative style. Meantime the hidden costs involved in centralization are omitted from the cash-accounting.

This superstition confounds the real confusion accompanying unique conditions of modern life, new technology, urbanization, and one world. For instance, automation, a centralized mode of production, is applied both where it is appropriate and where it is inappropriate, but little attempt is made to analyze these differences. And in automatic production itself, although there is a necessary concentration of capital in the equipment, it does not follow that programing should be under central control of the same corporation.

My bias is that automation should be applied to the maximum in the production of hardware and perhaps subsistence goods, in clerical work, etc.; but automation, computing, and standardizing methods in general, should be severely restricted in all human services, education, restaurants, social work, hospitals; e.g., there should be a standard high-

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grade TV machine made by the millions and at minimum price—even though this would lose certain excellences of highest quality, styling, workmanship—but the larger part of programing should be decentralized and for specific audiences.

In all forecasts of the fairly immediate future, it is said that employment in commodity production will be sharply diminished. But for useful leisure, the development of community culture, human services, and education, the rationalizing and cash-accounting style is inappropriate, whereas the decentralist style is enriching.

The grave threat in modern urbanization is *anomie,* the rootlessness and helplessness of individuals, the loss of citizenry. When it tries at all to cope with this, centralized administration tries to encourage "participation," but participation is empty unless it involves the possibility of initiating and deciding, that is, decentralized administration. It is interesting to contrast the dull formality of a PTA meeting at which nothing important can be decided with the liveliness of the public meeting of a local school board to which important authority has been delegated.

"Association" and "participation" are not mere interpersonal relations; they are sharing in objective enterprise.

III. Prevalent or Inevitable Defects of Centralization

HOWEVER COMPETENT, the few at the top who decide in large centralized enterprises are not enough minds to do an adequate job. Top managers—and independent professionals—are the most overworked members of society.

In "upward communication" of information, at each level there is processing and abstraction from the concrete; and with each abstraction there is the accumulation of mere approximation and of actual misfitting. Much is left out altogether.

To cope with the multifarious details and persons of large enterprises, recourse is had to standardization. This leads to inevitable misfitting and loss of peculiar appropriateness and quality. It is rare that the standard procedure is the best in any particular case.

The subordinates, meanwhile, necessarily become stupider, since they cannot learn by initiation and responsibility. In a departmental system, much of each man's capacity is unused. Each man knows only part of the process and so cannot really understand what he is doing. There is increased reliance on extrinsic motivations of salary, security, and perquisites, because subordinates cannot take satisfaction in completing the function. Finally, activity becomes timeserving and status-maintaining, regardless of the function.

In established organizations those who rise to the top also tend to be chosen by systematic rather than functional criteria. They are safe men. The image of performance is more important than the actuality. Since those who could criticize—colleagues, consumers, electorate—become stupider, the top men also become stupider.

The inflexible departments do not always dovetail; communication breaks down since few men have a sense of the whole. The resulting difficulties are solved by adding higher levels of control, more administrators.

Finally, the systems tend to run for their own sake. Since so much capital and so many persons are tightly interlocked in them, they cannot afford to risk any change; and any novelty or experiment involves dislocations and is "not worth the trouble." A system running for its own sake loses touch with its ostensible function and becomes isolated from the environment; its chief function is to protect, reward, and incestuously recruit its own personnel; its chief business is paper work, public relations, and the maintenance of a routine production.

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Unfortunately, when such systems are very large, they preempt the social means and space for carrying on their functions at all. There is no way to be effective outside the system and no way in the system, so people with inventive ideas and initiative become discouraged and either drop out or resign themselves to token performance. Worst of all, in many functions of society, simple direct action becomes quite impossible, even though it is commonsense and would meet with general approval. Eagerness and earnestness are stymied by licenses, merely formal standards, due process, confronting stuffed shirts, and the need for amounts of capital entirely disproportionate to the enterprise.

By and large our country at present is constituted of a rather small number of great commercial baronies, organized as described, which are private powers; these are checked by the great Public Power of governments; and there are also great entrenched organizations like the Pentagon, the FBI, the major universities and school systems, the labor unions, and a few others.

The baronies compete semimonopolistically, fix prices, and generally maintain the structure; and their relations with the labor unions are analogous. When Private Power confronts Public Power, e.g., in the regulatory agencies, the result is often a stalemate, so that there is no social motion. Often, however, there are alliances, as in the military-industrial, scientific agencies-universities, Urban Renewal/real estate promoters, etc., and these alliances lead to further aggrandizement of the same overgrown organizations, and the products are not distinguished by ingenuity, beauty, thrift, or precise utility.

A major area of abuse by interlocking is the preemption of Research and Development money in all fields by giant corporations. But recent reports of the Senate Anti-Trust Committee show that most invention *and innovation* come from individuals and small companies, and at far less cost. The big corporations use public subsidy for R & D mainly for what amounts to packaging for the consumer.

Despite the good intentions of many individuals in the system, this vast machinery of social power is almost powerless in most simple practical matters. Everyone in society, from lowly citizens to topmost leaders, shares the sneaking suspicion that "Nothing Can Be Done."

IV. Examples of Overgrown Systems

A. New York School System: A Classical Bureaucracy

(Let me say that I have affection for the earnestness of the New York City school system, its attentiveness to the children as the main object, its sincere egalitarianism, its concern for all types and conditions; its dreamy desire to experiment. But its structure is a disaster.)

The structure has been aggrandized from an ancient plan with little change. E.g., in 1900, 6 percent of 17-year-olds graduated from high school; now more than 60 percent. The system now serves 1 million children, there are 750 schools rather rigidly controlled by one headquarters; the annual budget exceeds $700 million —excluding capital improvements.

The following are expected, and actual, situations: to remove rats from a school, the principal cannot call an exterminator but must appeal to headquarters and go, in principle, to the Board of Estimate. To remove a door catch ("city property") requires years of appeal.

An architect is told that he is not allowed to consult the teachers of a school he is to replace; he must simply adapt standard plans that are a generation out of date and were not good to begin with. Because of specific pedagogic conditions, a principal asks for soundproofing, but no money can be allotted for that, although there is pro-

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vision for much less urgent needs. A very old-fashioned type of door hardware is specified, which is kept in production, for reasons of nepotism, only for the New York school system.

Despite this bureaucratic pedantry, there are public scandals because janitors have been taking home $50,000 a year, or a roof costs $750,000 to fix, and still leaks. On the other hand, there are scandals because of trivialities: a high school student has done carpentry on a boat for a school official.

When local school boards (with rather unspecified powers) were reestablished in 1962, at the end of a year of operation it was said that their main achievement so far was to make it possible for the field superintendents to communicate with headquarters (through the freewheeling of the local boards), something which had not occurred in two generations. For instance, a rubber stamp from the superintendent in charge of building was required to make alterations to a wall to install a valuable new press given to the School of Printing; all this would cost the city nothing, yet the rubber stamp was delayed for nearly two years, with a mountain of correspondence, till a local board complained loudly and got the stamp.

In recruiting teachers for such a vast system, processing takes nearly a year. Naturally, many of the bright new graduates go elsewhere, to the suburban communities. (Yet the civil service type of procedure is necessary to avoid nepotism and political pressure.) Entirely irrelevant qualifications, and the tie-in with the graduate schools that license teachers, keep many fine teachers out. It takes many years to change an outmoded rule; for instance, the rule that a teacher must have no trace of a foreign accent, that made sense during the height of the immigration three generations ago, was a disaster when some districts had 35 percent Puerto Rican children who could not speak English, yet one could not recruit bilingual teachers; the rule has only recently been modified.

The administrators, superintendents, and secretaries, principals, assistants, clerks, guidance personnel, attendance officers, etc., proliferate; yet the fundamental educational fact, the number of children per teacher, cannot be altered because of the expense; but the large classes do positive damage to both children and teachers, so that the whole system perhaps does more harm than good. Correspondingly, each school is too large. Where intelligent principals ask for 400, there are schools of 1800 and the official limit has finally been reduced to 1200. The requirements of educational community are necessarily sacrificed to administrative convenience and ignorant public pressure.

Timidity, administrative unwieldiness, the need for standardization put insuperable obstacles in the path of experiment. When an experiment—e.g., the tailor-made Higher Horizons—succeeds on a small scale, it is diluted by being standardized.

(Considerable, useful leeway *is* given to the principals—in both staffing and methods—so that the schools differ a good deal depending on the principal; but the teachers and staff meeting have far too little leeway.)

Finally, this vast system is made increasingly inflexible by its interlocking with the other aggrandizing systems of society, to form one nationwide educational monolith. E.g., the textbook manufacturers, the graduate schools of education, the National Science Foundation, the proliferating national testing services, the corporations, the church, the Pentagon.

B. Monolithic Mass Communications: A Constitutional Danger

The interlocking systems of mass communications with a few decision-makers at the top of each system produce inevitable brainwashing and make democracy impossible.

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Some kinds of news and events do warrant standard national researching and broadcast. Only great news services and networks can perform such services. Therefore we need a mixed system.

Fewer than 60 towns have competing newspapers (in 1900 there were 600). These are served now by only three international news services. With the best will in the world, these few persons cannot know what is all the real news. Three big broadcasting networks get most of their news from the same source.

The standard of living (how to be decent) and what is correct and tolerable in expression and entertainment is determined by these networks, the movies, and a few national magazines; but the sustaining advertisers are the same and the ownership elaborately interlocks.

This system requires creating a pervasive mass audience and attitude. Anything that might offend a large segment (a few hundred thousand) must be excluded; the vast capitalization demands a vast audience to pay for itself. There is thus an inevitable restriction to the sensational and the bland. (The "storm of angry letters" that the sponsors fear may finally be as few as 20.)

Since there must be limited broadcasting channels, if the networks control most of them there is an implicit censorship. And this becomes explicit when tapes are wiped out and certain speakers are officially or unofficially blacklisted. The FCC has proved powerless to compel reasonable coverage of everything worthwhile. The licenses once given are apparently in perpetuity.

The networks, once established, can wield enormous political pressure. (In one case of being threatened, a network was promptly able to produce 10,000 telegrams sent by children.) The equal-time provision has been abrogated for national elections—the networks are trying to extend the revocation to state elections. If they also control most of the local stations, this makes it impossible for new political thought to enter into discourse.

The expensive network time makes for minute and second scheduling, and thus a format that prevents freedom of thought or art. Also the discouragement of using especially TV to cover actualities—since these might always prove either boring or untoward.

In publishing of books, there is similar concentration of capitalization (huge presses and teams of salesmen and promotion), and this increasingly determines the content and format of books, in order to make it possible to set such big capital in motion. And there is interlocking with magazines for serialization, with book clubs, with Hollywood.

The flood of publication, broadcasting, and journalism in the style, format, and acceptable content of the mass media, decided by the few who rise to the top in such vast semimonopolies, finally swamps independent and dissenting thought and style and constitutes a virtual censorship in depth. Overexposed to one fairly homogeneous kind of interpretation, and underexposed to any rival interpretation (and in some localities and on the TV medium not so exposed at all), people begin to take the interpretation of the interlocking mass media for the reality; that is, they are brainwashed. This is a constitutional crisis for democracy.

C. Cars and Roads: Hypertrophy of a System Beyond Function

During the '20s, automobiles began to be sold for style and status rather than more serious function and convenience; this removed natural limitations on the proliferation of such formidable and expensive objects. Meantime, the middle-class suburbanites pressured the building of parkways. There is now a car for every 2.7 Americans, considerably more than one to a family.

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The cars exist as the crucial element in a vast complex—of fuel, servicing, and highways—that entirely transforms the environment. Highways are built at a cost varying from $500,000 to $3 million a mile. After armaments, highway construction is the big item in federal budgets, and it looms immensely in state budgets.

By 1970 the cost, with accrued interest, of roads for a single car trip five miles to the center of Washington will come to $2.50 (per car trip) each way. Fifty percent of central Los Angeles has been given over to the roadways.

General Motors alone employs 600,000 people; its annual turnover is $14 billion. The automotive complex (including oil and roads) has become indispensable to keep the economy going, so that a falling off of car sales can precipitate a serious recession. "What is good for General Motors is good for the country."

Three or four car manufacturers control the market, competing semimonopolistically with fixed prices and improvements spooned out slowly. Progress in design has been determined entirely by profits; the increase in power has been largely for sales and is unfunctional for most situations. Even safety features are neglected. (And 40,000 are killed annually in automobile accidents.) Only the competition of European small cars made, for a time, a radical change. No effort has been made, e.g., to develop an efficient, small, slower-moving electric for urban use (taxis). Also, expensive as they are, cars are built not to last, and the companies push for laws to exempt them from supplying parts for longer than five years.

Because of direct and indirect subsidy, cars and trucks have pushed other kinds of transportation out of the picture, especially for commuting. There is little effort to achieve a balanced transit pattern, using all means for the general convenience. In most large cities, traffic congestion and parking are almost intolerably inconvenient; the fleets of cars on the suburban parkways make no economic or psychological sense.

The cars and highways have imposed an entirely new and disruptive community plan. The tremendous suburbanization has become their creature. Villages and city neighborhoods are disrupted by highway shopping centers. Families are dispersed and the lives of children depend on automobility. Centralized plants, including central schools, claim per-product efficiency, but the hidden costs of the highways and transportation are not counted.

Of course most of this imposition of a new pattern would have been impossible if there had not been advantages and conveniences in the cars; but by hypertrophy the system has itself become the dominant cause. The highway planning now occurs independently and determines the location of communities and the manner of life in them.

In the mess we are in, however, the only conceivable remedy is public centralized regulation and planning. The automotive complex must now be treated as a "natural monopoly" and regulated.

D. Supermarkets: Logistic Planning That Proves to Be Inefficient

The effect of the hyperorganization of food production, processing, distance transportation, and supermarket retailing has been that the farmer's share of the take has persistently diminished (e.g., 44 percent in 1953, and 38 percent in 1963), whereas the profits of the chains themselves have *not* risen, and food prices to the consumer have risen slightly. This is an application of Borsodi's Law: as the cost of production per unit diminishes because of centralized operation, the cost of processing and distribution increases disproportionately. This law is relevant especially for bulky and perishable commodities like foodstuffs, and where the

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fixed capital investment *can* be relatively low in proportion to the product (as in natural farming).

At present, $1 out of every $2 spent for food goes to 100 corporate or (not Rochdale) cooperative chains. Seventy percent of all food sales is through the central systems. The 10 largest chains sell 30 percent of all food.

In this system both farmers and retailers fall under the control and decision-making of the chains. Farmers contract long beforehand, regardless of weather or the ability to take advantage of sudden opportunities. The emphasis is entirely on large-scale cash-cropping. Farmers' markets in the towns and cities are closed. Inevitably, marginal farms must discontinue, and this is an important cause of the present excessive urbanization. (Farm families now make up less than 8 percent of the population.)

It is clear that in many thousands of cases people would choose the farm way of life if there were any possibilities of getting any cash at all; e.g., in some states a small rise in the farmer's price for milk results in many marginal farms resuming operation. But at present farm subsidies overwhelmingly favor the big operators.

With the concentration of growing in huge plantations in Texas, Florida, California, etc., breeding and hybridization are determined in terms of canning, ability to preserve and ship, and appearance for mass sale, rather than freshness, flavor, or nutrition. Very little is naturally nurtured or naturally ripened. There is excessive use of pesticides.

In the retailing there is a profound change in consumer habits. Packaging assumes great importance, no matter what is in the packages. Consumers pay several cents more for a brand-name product (e.g., Clorox, although a locally bottled bleach is identical in every respect). Independent grocers are forced out, adding to the anonymity and *anomie* of urban neighborhoods.

Nevertheless, despite these disruptive changes in the way of life of farm and city, brought on by rationalization of food production and distribution, there is little increase of actual efficiency. And there is a tremendous social and economic cost in forced urbanization and rural depopulation.

V. Costs in Service Enterprises With Different Organization and Motivation

CONSIDER A RANGE of services where staff and overhead are the chief costs. With extrinsic motivation and organization not growing from the function, the cost may rise by a factor of 3, 5, or 10, or more. E.g., the following somewhat comparable enterprises:

On Broadway a modest play (without music) requires upward of $100,000 to rehearse and mount, and $20,000 a week to run. The standard estimate for an off-Broadway production, e.g., as at the Living Theater is $20,000 to mount and $2000 a week to run. Professionally, these productions will be comparable in every way—we are not here considering the aesthetic or community value. Contrast with both these types an ad hoc production by artists, e.g., a play in the loft of the Judson Church: this might cost $50 to $500 to mount and nothing at all to run, since the script, acting, staging, and space are all gratis.

In TV, NBC-sponsored time costs $143,000 an hour for 220 stations, $650 per outlet for the network, or $2,000 for one station. This does not include the cost of the program: a very modest half-hour program costs $10,000 to produce. Now compare two nonprofit (educational TV) stations: WNDT in New York costs $650 an hour to run, not much cheaper than commercial television (but this figure includes the cost of programing). On the other hand, KQED in San Francisco runs for $225 an

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hour. The difference is that the top salary at WNDT is $45,000, the staff about 150, etc., whereas at KQED the top salary is $15,000, the staff about 50, etc. Professionally the two stations are equivalent, but KQED is much more daring and lively. (Characteristically, the staff turnover at KQED is almost nil—we are obviously relying on artistic and technical motivation—whereas WNDT is a way station for persons moving toward higher salaries elsewhere.)

In radio, WMCA charges $700 an hour for air time, excluding the cost of the program. But WBAI, a listener-supported station of comparable power, costs $38 an hour to run, including programing (provided gratis by artists, academics, or the politically minded). WBAI is one of the three stations of the Pacifica Federation, which exchange tapes but are entirely independent.

A good nonresidential private school in New York, class size 20, costs about $850 per pupil per year, not counting plant and some endowment. An elementary pupil in the New York Public School System costs $750, also excluding capital costs for plant and replacement; the class size is officially 29, but in fact most classes are 32–35. Thus public and private costs are similar. By contrast, a Summerhill school in Stony Point costing $500 per child, provides, for 50 children, three full-time paid instructors and the equivalent of about five more voluntary teachers from among parents who are artists or professionals and teach part time. (The public system, by and large, discourages the entry of unlicensed teachers into the classroom.)

College tuition at Columbia or Cornell is $1700, which is estimated to be a little more than 50 percent of the actual cost per student for "education and educational administration." The markup over actual classroom costs is 400 percent. (At smaller liberal arts colleges, e.g., Wesleyan in Connecticut, the markup is 300 percent.) Especially in the freshman and sophomore classes, the professors lecture to very large classes and the smaller groups are taught by ill-paid section men. In the small colleges proposed in *The Community of Scholars,* the tuition is estimated at $650, with 10 professors for 150 students.

The Peace Corps is a model of efficient and dedicated bureaucracy. Yet it costs more than $12,000 to select, train, and maintain a volunteer for one year ($9000 for the volunteer, $3000 for central administration, liaison with host countries, etc.). The Friends Service VISA program, which is comparable in essential respects, provides the same service for $3500 a volunteer. For another comparison, Operation Crossroads, prorated for the same period, costs $5000. Important causes of expense in the Peace Corps are the very rigid selection to protect the image abroad (only one of eight original applicants is finally sent), training in the setting of an American university, and propaganda and promotion. The Friends spend nothing at all on administration (the program is taken care of as an extra duty by their regular offices), prefer to train in the field where conditions are known, and their candidates have a service philosophy to begin with.

Official urban renewal planned for the West Village in New York City was to cost $30 million (including a $7 million subsidy), to provide net 300 units after demolition and relocation. A counterplan proposed by a neighborhood group would cost $8.5 million, without subsidy for net 475 units, without neighborhood disruption and relocation. The savings in this case come from tailoring to the actual needs by real architects rather than bureaucrats and promoters. The neighborhood plan comes to $18,000 a unit. Incidentally, in a similar neighborhood, with the unpaid labor of friends, I remodeled a commercial loft to

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a comparable standard for $500, and the rental at ordinary market value and amortization came to considerably less. That is: the professional neighborhood housing is cheaper than official housing, but artists' lofts are cheaper still.

There is no mystery about what swells costs in commercial, official, and Establishment enterprises, where the organization, motivation, and procedure are not designed directly to fullfill the function. It is profits, patents, and rents; semimonopolistic fixed prices; need for union protection of workmen hired for somebody else's enterprise, union scales and featherbedding; salaries determined by considerations of status because the personnel is not intrinsically motivated to the task; expense accounts; proliferation of administrators, paper work, business machines; the waste of skill by departmentalizing task roles and standardizing procedure inflexibly; high cost of contingencies because of tight scheduling; public relations and promotion to shore up the image.

On the other hand, when enterprises are run autonomously by professionals and artists intrinsically committed to the task, people make do on means and procedure; they become inventive by making decisions flexibly as opportunity presents; they keep an eye on the essence rather than the convention; they put in as many hours as are necessary without watching the clock; they use all available skills wherever available; they eschew status and sometimes live on a subsistence wage; and administration and overhead are tailored to what is indispensable for the concrete function.

To Our Contributors

- When sending manuscripts, please make sure that you do not send your only copy.
- And please also be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. —THE EDITORS

VI. Typology of Enterprises in Terms of Engagement

A. Enterprises Extrinsically Motivated as Part of the Organized System:

1. Commercial enterprises, run for profit as well as status, etc.
   (E.g., NBC or the Broadway theater.)
2. Official or Establishment non-profit enterprises
   (E.g., Columbia University, WNDT.)

B. Enterprises Determined by the Function or Concrete Task:

3. Professional
   (E.g., KQED, Friends Service, West Village Neighborhood.)
4. Artistic or community
   (E.g., Judson Players, WBAI, the Barker School, artists' lofts.)

Profit-motivated enterprises may or may not be more efficient than Establishment nonprofit enterprises. Since performance in the nonprofit field is largely symbolic, there is no attempt to cut costs. But the cutting of costs in profit enterprises is largely offset by the grasping, padding, and status-seeking of the personnel. An extremely extravagant model is the *combination* of centralized commercial and official enterprises, as in cost-plus contracts. This is the opposite of the TVA idea, where the official was to serve as a yardstick.

Intrinsic professional performance necessarily costs more than artistic and community performance (which really costs nothing beyond materials and subsistence) because the persons are members of a licensed or peer-group guild; they are institutions, and this is usually necessary for continuous operation over a range of occasions. Artistic performances, on the contrary, are ad hoc. (For a continuously productive artist, each work is ad hoc.)

Add to these four types two other extreme types of production and service. On the

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one hand there are family, amateur, and folk enterprises, which do not enter the cash nexus at all but are very important for the economic and social well-being. For instance, one nation might have a per capita "income" several times more than another, and yet the actual standard of living may be very little different, since the "poorer" nation is more skilled and self-reliant.

On the other hand, there are the great background enterprises that fill universal needs, necessary for a modern society to function: municipal services, natural monopolies, literacy, subsistence, etc. It is probably most convenient and efficient to run all of these by free appropriation. The standards and motives of personnel should be strictly professional. (This is Marx's "administration" that is supposed to supersede the "withering away of the state," but in my opinion he extends the range of these functions too far and would make the whole society lifeless. These functions are best regarded as merely supportive and background.)

VII. Idea of a Mixed System

THE ABOVE SIX TYPES of enterprise are, in one form or another, operative in any modern society. But the proportions are, of course, very various—so the United States, Russia, Sweden, Nigeria, etc., have different real constitutions.

The idea of a mixed system is a proportioning among types of enterprise so that they in fact influence one another pluralistically and if necessary can check one another.

A mixed system would try to keep the proportion of the types roughly within limits of maximum cost efficiency. (I doubt that the American proportion is at all within these limits. E.g., it takes $30,000 in new investment to reemploy one workman.) This might involve *lowering* the GNP: e.g., cooperative enterprises often avoid cash transactions; a quality standard of living is less cultured and often costs less; skilled and engaged people do more directly for themselves and one another, e.g., repairs; a better rural-urban ratio, say 20 percent instead of 7 percent, would be more efficient as well as more socially and culturally satisfactory.

A mixed system would allow various types of motivation and organization to do what they can do most appropriately and cheaply.

A mixed system would reopen opportunities for people to choose the way of working and living that most suits them, and would thus recreate the possibility of engagement. □

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Bernard Rosenberg

The Example of Norman Thomas

Ours is an omnivorous culture. Even the most prickly and apparently indigestible of critics, like Lenny Bruce and Paul Goodman, get cannibalized. Therefore, it ought to surprise no one that a socialist leader in America should be universally honored as an elder statesman. This is the fate of Norman Thomas, and not just now as he approaches his eightieth birthday; it has dogged him throughout his career.

Murray Seidler, the more scholarly and detached, if less intimate, of two biographers,* dubs Thomas a "respectable rebel," and sums him up as a "successful failure." The labels fit. We have to do with a complex paradox which tells us perhaps as much about ourselves as about Norman Thomas. Most people who have known him have loved the man while eschewing his principles. They seem largely to have agreed with the H. L. Mencken of 1948 who declared that it was "a rare and exhilarating pleasure" to hear Thomas, the only presidential candidate that year to strike Mencken as being a "really intelligent and civilized man." Whereupon, most of them went out to vote for a Republican or a Democrat, too often neither intelligent nor civilized.

The virtues everywhere ascribed to Thomas are in very short supply among politicians, and we have shamelessly wasted them. Even when leavened by charisma within a big opportunistic party (say, by an Adlai Stevenson), intelligence and urbanity are not conducive to victory at the polls. Still able to exhilarate and even electrify an audience as spokesman for a minority party, Thomas has naturally never held public office.

Six times the presidential nominee of his party, Thomas has withheld his name from the ballot since 1948. Asked recently if he would run in 1964, he replied, "Run? I can hardly walk." Actually, he continues to walk at rather a brisk pace, on and off picket lines, and from one platform to another, still alert, still responsive, still animated by an irresistible spirit of gaiety. Nevertheless, there is just enough poignant truth in his witticism to make it infinitely sad that through all these decades such a man should have been allowed to run for president, governor, senator, mayor, and never win.

That a socialist should be excluded from the formal exercise of power, while being celebrated on all sides, is somewhat less puzzling than why this man should have become a socialist at all—for there can be little doubt that he could have made his mark in conventional politics.

Bernard Kops has said: "Take one Jew and already you have an opposition party." But a middle-class Presbyterian reared in Marion, Ohio? Take one, and already you probably have a more famous Marionite: Warren G. Harding, the cipher who played

* Murray Seidler, *Norman Thomas: Respectable Rebel* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1961). Harry Fleischman, *Norman Thomas: A Biography* (New York: Norton, 1964).

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at being President. Young Norman was an all-American boy, an animal-lover, much interested in sports, outgoing, a booster. The son and grandson of ministers, he too was destined for the cloth. There is no recorded rebellion at adolescence, no tempestuous rejection of parental beliefs, neither of the religious orthodoxy nor the conservative Republicanism that Thomas imbibed as a boy. Nor is there a breath of skepticism, let alone radicalism in the college student, Princeton-bred and insulated from hard realities, who does his stint as an old-fashioned social worker, becomes a seminarian and, finally, a clergyman—albeit of the liberal persuasion.

What causes someone with such a life history to invite trouble, indeed to court it by defying the gods of his society? None of the usual clichés applies. In his thirties Norman Thomas ceased to be the Reverend Thomas. He chose to embrace socialism and join a dissident little political party that had already seen its glory days. We may say, in the jargon of social science, that Thomas's relatively late change is an example of radical, adult, but not entirely discontinuous "resocialization." His brother and lifelong soul mate, Evan, himself a pacifist, recalls, "... We were brought up to be good. Success was not a goal in our family." Thus the hyperactive conscience, if not all its elements, did have roots in a specific background which, when coupled with later experience, flowered into the personality we know.

As both Seidler and Fleischman make clear, the decisive experience took place over a period of ten years in the slums of New York City, where Thomas and his bride —even less of a proletarian than he—devoted themselves to ameliorating the woe around them. Still a Republican, but greatly disturbed by the difference between life as he saw it and as he had been taught to see it, Thomas by 1912 had registered as a Bull Moose Progressive. In a class letter he wrote:

> With all my love for Princeton, I sometimes think, unjustly of course, that my education really began when I left there and that not the smallest part of it has been the life here in this district. It is a sort of school which sets hard lessons and asks some difficult questions. What is our democracy worth? How shall we make it apply to our social, industrial, and political problems? Are we preparing well for national safety in peace or war when so many of our workers cannot even under favorable conditions make the proper living wage?

So the route was classically Fabian: from a privileged position, through "poverty, filth, and vice" in the metropolis, to Christian, or at least a greatly muted Marxist socialism. The vain effort to grapple with overwhelming social problems at a settlement-house level made many a preprofessional English or American social worker conclude that total change was necessary. Later, with the professionalization of social work and the conversion of many "angels of mercy" into "snoopy civil servants," a narrower psychiatric emphasis took over.

Having learned the lesson that "our various reform efforts were, in the words of the familiar simile, like bailing out the tub while we kept the faucet running," Thomas was ripe for socialism. In 1907, shortly after graduation from Princeton, he took a trip around the world; in a quasi-clerical capacity, he was able to see much of Asia, and there, starting with a view of empire much like Kipling's, he learned to despise colonialism. All the while he was reading widely, a habit with which he is still afflicted.

Then came the war which propelled Thomas out of his pulpit for good, and plunged him into pacifism and socialism, movements which that war almost certainly doomed to failure. The Thomas family crisis must have been very acute. Of the elder Thomas's four tall sons, two had no great scruples about military service, the other two conscientiously objected to it. Evan, accurately described by Seidler as "an eccentric blend . . . part socialist, part anarchist, part pacifist, part agnostic," went to prison under barbarous conditions, subsequently

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became chairman of the War Resisters' League, continued unremittingly to struggle for peace, and flirted with but never joined the Socialist party. Their soldier brother Ralph wrote to Norman in February 1918, "I am sorry we don't agree in this, the biggest affair of our lives, but you know I respect your courage of conviction and idealism." Norman Thomas perpetuated this politically permissive attitude within his own family; he never sought to impose socialism on his children; he is dear to them, but they are no more heirs of his legacy than the public at large.

A solid substratum of tolerance, then, underlay all differences among the Thomases over several generations. This quality helps one understand that character which so many find very nearly exemplary. Thomas could always laugh, not least at himself, and though often grim and stern, he has never been subject to fanaticism, the ideologue's occupational disease. It is hard to resist the conclusion that just those elements in his makeup which militated against election to office made certain he could leave a great impact upon the nation. To an extraordinary degree, he has become what his campaign literature always claimed for him: the incorruptible watchdog of American society.

Not that Thomas is a saint. He points to his own irascibility and impatience (if only to offset the many encomia which sound to him like premature obituaries). A great naiveté in personal relations is the commonest criticism one hears nowadays. Yet this too reflects favorably on the man, for it is said that he too frequently allowed himself to be deceived by assuming that the integrity of others was as great as his own.

What else is wrong with Thomas? Well, both biographers assert that his otherwise superb speeches suffer from overrapid delivery. Seidler attributes this oratorical weakness to Thomas's habit of talking fast into the telephone during the period when A. Mitchell Palmer's boys might be listening, and Fleischman attributes it to the party's penury which required Thomas to cover everything over the radio in a breathless 15 minutes.

All the same, Thomas has been taken to task severely enough throughout most of his life, from Left, Right and Center, outside and inside a party historically given over to factionalism—when not engaged in the more serious business of fratricidal warfare. After World War I, Thomas emerged as the leader of a Socialist party in the doldrums. It had grown steadily and flourished from 1901 to 1912. The year Thomas voted for Teddy Roosevelt, Debs polled nearly a million votes, and in this same year, Seidler reminds us, the party was able to boast that 1,039 of its members were public officeholders, including 56 mayors, more than 300 aldermen, some state legislators, and a member of Congress. The party had a vigorous youth movement, 13 daily newspapers, 232 English and 36 foreign-language weeklies, 12 monthlies, a copious flow of pamphlets, growing strength among students and in organized labor, where the Socialist Max Hayes gave Gompers a real run for the AFL presidency. And in Debs, Morris Hillquit, and Victor Berger, American socialism could claim an attractive group of leaders.

Then, in 1914, all hell broke loose. In the wreckage of World War I, we may find the remains of socialism, a shriveled token of international brotherhood. Soon after war broke out, Thomas recalls, "Socialists were killing socialists as cheerfully, or docilely, as Christians were killing Christians. Democratic Socialism in 1914 missed a tremendous opportunity of a sort which never could return again." That the powerful socialists of Europe betrayed their principles and that Thomas stood by them, isolating himself from chauvinists of every stripe, is a matter of historical record. So is the general collapse that followed. Why did socialism fail to catch fire in the United States? The list of reasons is a long one (the Russian Revo-

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lution, fascism, the New Deal, the Second World War, the conservatism of American labor, its comparative well-being, and so on), but none was as profoundly shattering as the Great War.

That war, to which most Americans rallied with a romantic enthusiasm such as they were never again to know, caused widespread departures from the Socialist party. Thomas does not exaggerate when he observes, "I entered the party just as everyone else was leaving." And hardly a moment too soon. The war and the red scares of 1919–20 left their mark. Debs had not long to go, his last years were clouded, and few thought the party could outlive him. A biographer of Debs, David Karsner, intoned in 1924, "It becomes increasingly clear as the Socialist Party steps into the shadows, that it was a one-man organization . . . ," a view interminably repeated since Thomas's formal assumption of leadership in 1928.

As an organization man, it is generally admitted, Thomas was no great shakes. Even his loyal campaign manager in 1944 and 1948, Harry Fleischman, scores Thomas for having been bored by organizational details. The socialist standard-bearer really came to life only in discussing issues. "In public speeches, he would stir his audience and then all too often forget to urge them to join the Socialist Party." Seidler, by contrast, credits Thomas with reawakening the party through personal communication between various locals and national headquarters, and doing "yeoman service . . . on a strictly organizational level." He was a tireless and apparently effective fund-raiser. For years Thomas appears to have known more about local conditions by maintaining direct ties with local activists than anyone else in the party.

And yet, and yet—the party was hideously undone by factionalism. It tore American socialism apart from 1930 to 1940. Was Thomas's incapacity to handle internal schisms responsible for all the bitterness of those years, the dissipation of energy, the scar tissue that would not heal? It would seem that the role he played exacerbated a bad situation. Would another stance (short of Lenin's disastrous "democratic centralism") have helped? Surely not much. Let us glance at some of the prevailing circumstances.

First of all, a millennial spirit and an apocalyptic atmosphere. In the '30s capitalism was actually crumbling; socialists had reason to feel vindicated. It seemed to them that the rest of their vision would also soon unfold, and that, with proper tactics, socialism was within their grasp. Each faction thought it knew best how to attain the cherished goal. Those who at the time squabbled over esoteric dogma can scarcely remember what it signified, but all are agreed that their faction-fighting bordered on savagery.

A second factor, which Seidler and others have emphasized, was generational conflict: younger people in the party versus older people; newcomers keen on innovation and bristling with verbal radicalism, pitted against a more conservative Old Guard that had long controlled party policy and machinery. With the depression, there was a big spurt in membership, which increased the distance between hotheads and coolheads. These contingents, subtly subdivided in ways that no longer bear recounting, made up the two big factions and produced the great split of 1936 which decimated the Socialist party beyond hope of recovery.

The conflict, further complicated by tension between foreign-born and native members, and sectional rivalries, as well as Thomas's determination not to be a mere figurehead, had been simmering for some time. At the national convention of 1932, an attempt was made to oust Morris Hillquit as national chairman, and some of the grounds used by his opponents, at least by innuendo, smacked of anti-Semitism. There were murmurings about that foreign-born New York Jew, which prompted Hillquit to

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tell the delegates: "I apologize for being born abroad, for being a Jew, and for living in New York." This shamed them into re-electing him—without dampening the fires of discord. Torn many ways, the party nonetheless did unusually well in 1932, an electoral peak for Thomas which must have thrown a little scare into FDR, who appropriated some planks from the socialist platform. ("Roosevelt carried it out," New Dealers used to say. "On a stretcher," Thomas would add.)

Ferment in the party did not abate. Three factions, "Thomasites," young Militants, and Old Guardists crystallized as they moved toward a painful showdown in the national convention of 1936. Thomas for the most part occupied a centrist position between his party's left wing and its right wing. The pamphleteering, the cruel in-fighting, and the passionate speechifying that ensued have been amply documented from every point of view. Controversy swirled mainly around a resolution called "Declaration of Principles," drawn up by a Militant, and some of its passages seemed to be sounding a Bolshevik clarion call. Thomas found himself in full sympathy with neither faction, and, failing in strenuous efforts to reconcile them, finally sided with the Militants, an act symbolized by his vote in favor of their Declaration. A majority of the delegates also endorsed that misbegotten manifesto. Whereupon the Old Guard withdrew.

The Thomas of 1936 was a trifle "soft on Communism," although not soft enough to satisfy those of his comrades in the Socialist International who would have liked to support the Popular Front. But in another year or two, with the Moscow Trials, Thomas took the full measure of Soviet totalitarianism —of which he became a principal scourge and to which he consistently offered a democratic alternative.

It cannot be denied that Thomas was briefly, if not very seriously, mistaken about Bolshevism and Stalinism, nor that Louis Waldman and other representatives of the Old Guardists were, in this respect, right. But there is a final fillip to the story that should not be forgotten. The Old Guard no sooner deserted the Socialist party than it joined the American Labor party—which was dominated by the Communists, who never managed to infiltrate Norman Thomas's Socialist party except as spies. And the Militants? Most of them objected to Thomas's moderation—until they drifted to the New Deal, and shyly or ardently espoused it.

How should Thomas have comported himself in this whirlpool? He has been taxed, notably by Daniel Bell, for not going along with the Old Guard (a few of whose remnants rejoined the Socialist party in 1957) and mercilessly ridiculed as a phony socialist, notably by the Trotskyist intelligentsia that entered his party in bad faith in 1939, only to break off another chunk of the membership (and some of *its* remnants rejoined the Socialist party in 1957). He is criticized both for his intransigence and for his latitudinarianism, and maybe each in its time was inappropriate. Perhaps. Perhaps he should have been lax when he was firm and firm when he was lax. The only pertinent question remains, Would it have made any difference? There is now no reason to believe that it would. And if the issue is not just tactical but moral, then Thomas's stature is not diminished, while that of his critics is.

In a monograph on American socialism, Bell pinpointed two grave flaws in Thomas as a party leader: he distrusted his own generation and surrounded himself with younger men who allegedly stood in an admiring and uncritical relation to him. To this indictment, Fleischman offers a convincing rebuttal:

> To a certain extent, Bell's charge that Thomas preferred the company of younger men in the Party is correct. But he fails to

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explain why. In the thirties, most of the older men in the Party were Old Guardists, who elevated inactivity to the dignity of a theory. There were some Old Guard leaders, however, whom Thomas not only respected but warmly liked, such as B. Charney Vladeck and Abraham Shiplacoff. As for the young men, far from being "admiring and uncritical" of Thomas, they were hypercritical—and usually on flimsy grounds. They considered themselves "more revolutionary" than Thomas and better theoreticians. But Thomas sympathized with their zeal, and felt that time and experience would tone down their left-wing dogmatism. (As one of those youngsters, I can testify that Thomas was right about our development. Most of us agree that he was far more correct then than we were.)

With both wings gone, the Socialist party could hardly be expected to soar. In the '40s, it nearly perished of blows more crushing than those that had already been absorbed. With another World War in the offing, many interventionists dropped away (quietly, in deference to Thomas, as part of a "silent split"). Of those who remained some were prowar, others antiwar. Thomas had abandoned absolute pacifism by backing the Loyalist cause in Spain. Thus when he opposed American entry into the Second World War, it was not for doctrinal reasons. The handful of socialists who favored war stayed with their few confreres who were against it in a miniature of the "all-inclusive party" that Thomas had once dreamed of creating. His own passion for peace, based partly on a mistaken conviction that war would totalitarianize the United States, led him to his lowest fortunes. He who had spurned common action with the Communists, for a brief time consented to common action with the America First Committee. That there were many liberal isolationists willing to do likewise in no way absolves him of a cardinal blunder. Our pride in him stems very largely from his avoidance of pitfalls constantly trapping liberals. Lending his good name to America First and its bigots only demeaned him, for no cause could justify this unnatural alliance. Fortunately, it was a passing aberration. After Pearl Harbor Thomas adopted a position of "critical support" for the war—thereby shocking and losing pacifists without gaining any new adherents.

If Thomas hit bottom in 1940, he may well have reached his high point four years later. Today, he views the campaign of 1944 as the most satisfying of his career. Not, surely, on account of the votes cast for him, a paltry 80,518, but because of the sensible message he alone carried to the people. Who else was there to excoriate the President for violating the rights of Japanese-American citizens when they were transported to our very own concentration camps? To proclaim that Soviet Russia, for all the liberals' renewed infatuation with it, was still a slave state? That unconditional surrender was an insane policy?

If, 20 years later, the Liberal Establishment could be made to read those speeches and to compare them with the productions concocted for Roosevelt and Dewey, the effect would only be embarrassing, and, just possibly, chastening. There is no ectoplasmic presence in anything Thomas ever says, for

dissent

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one reason because he cannot afford ghost writers, and for another, because he finds them morally offensive. The quips he made in '48 about Truman and Dewey (Truman asking his speech-writers, "What's it going to be tonight?" and Dewey pictured as a candidate "clad each day in a pair of platitudes") apply as well to scores of political opponents Thomas has bested simply by speaking for himself.

He speaks and he speaks, not only through his minuscule political party, but through the many voluntary organizations he has had a hand in founding. Tocqueville contended that only with a multiplicity of such organizations could democracy be secured and preserved. If so, then in helping to build the Civil Liberties Union, the League for Industrial Democracy, the Post-War World Council, the Workers Defense League, SANE, The American Committee on Africa, Spanish Refugee Aid, Inc., and many more—all intrinsically valuable—we begin to see the magnitude of his contribution.

There is no end to the tributes, and no doubt about their accuracy. Here is Bryn J. Hovde, former president of the New School for Social Research, echoing many others on Thomas:

> His function in our public life has been that of planting doubt where other leaders thought they had implanted certainty, that of arousing controversy about alleged divine inspiration in economics, that of holding up, always with hands of glowing utterance, the shape of a better world than that we have. Norman Thomas, in all his strenuous campaigning, never ran for office. There was never any prospect of his election—to office, that is. He was elected to be sure, or to use the language of his profession "elect," to serve greater purposes than administration. He is "elect" in the way of Isaiah and Micah, a prophet among us to chide us when we do wrong and to show us the light.

But how many of us see by his light? When Thomas insists in 1964 that the basic problems to which socialism addressed itself remain unsolved, he is advancing an elementary truth which few Americans care to face. To face it would be to recognize that he is not a prophet with premonitions of doom for mankind in some vague and indefinite future, but a man devoted to saving us from race suicide right now. The canonization of Norman Thomas is no substitute for the fulfillment of his vision, and celebration of his character no substitute for acting upon his truth. □

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Stanley Plastrik

Marching on Montgomery

The twenty-five thousand Americans who converged upon Montgomery on March 25 surely did not represent the "best" of America in terms of wealth, status or power, but —in the words of Bayard Rustin—"all the best in America" was there. No one who went through that exhilarating day will ever forget it. It was the most powerful, confident, and dramatic civil rights confrontation ever held in America. If the March on Washington may be likened to a declaration of purpose on the part of the American Negro, the March on Montgomery was his declaration that henceforth he will walk without fear. That this confrontation took place in the heart of the unreconstructed South only underscored its drama.

Coming from New York in a hastily arranged flight, one first became aware of the approaching tension upon reaching the comparatively moderate city of Atlanta. There, waiting for the Montgomery plane connection, one encountered the first curious and hostile stares; more important, there were the people who, like oneself, were Montgomery bound. It was the most natural thing to approach them, introduce oneself, and exchange notes. Some were veterans of the movement (SNCC, Catholic Interracial Youth Council, etc.); others, like myself, were veterans of past movements and peripheral participants in this one; still others (most of the nuns and clerics) were experiencing the excitement of their first "witnessing" and mass action.

The passengers on the Montgomery-bound plane broke up into two groups—the "invaders" (how many times were we to hear that word) and the white Southerners, hostile, confused, angry. At the airport chartered buses were ready and rolling, to carry the new arrivals to the City of St. Jude, the previous night's camping site, from which the March would be completed. In a few moments we were rolling along the now famous Route 80 toward the complex of red brick buildings making up St. Jude.

The March was already underway. The highway leading into the city was packed with an orderly, impressive, moving crowd. Before long we were entering the southern outskirts of the city, walking through an all-Negro section of the city.

As we swung onto the broad street that leads downtown through the center of Montgomery and then upward to the capitol building itself, the first heckling from white bystanders began. But by now the March was so massive, its tone and spirit so high, that this heckling meant nothing. It was met with smiles of contempt. Few whites lined the main street; most were behind the windows of the somewhat seedy office buildings and stores that lined the street. Stationed along the line of march were hundreds of the federalized Alabama state guard, a hostile, sloppy group of soldiers, many smoking, drinking coke, and shuffling around. (Many of these protectors had sewn small confederate flags onto their uniforms.) The noisiest

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expression of hatred came from the office buildings in which insurance companies, auto sales stores, etc., were located—white-collar sales people, insurance salesmen, clerks.

THE MAIN STREET dips down toward the center of Montgomery at a slight slope, flattens out, then rises toward the state capitol on a similar slope where, around a bend, stands the capitol building itself. This was the road on which Jefferson Davis, one hundred years ago, walked to be sworn in as president of the Confederacy. The most impressive view of the afternoon was at the bottom of this dip—ahead were ten or more thousand people, marching six abreast and singing freedom songs; behind an equal number of people stretching to the very outskirts of the town.

Who will ever forget his first view of the Alabama capitol building, flying the state flag and, underneath, a huge flag of the Confederacy? Only the marchers carried the American flag. As the marchers gathered closer together to form one solid, disciplined, and orderly meeting, the only onlookers were knots of soldiers, and state employees staring out of the buildings. Governor Wallace handled himself in a confused manner throughout the day, now agreeing to see a delegation, then rejecting a meeting. The point is that the power of this demonstration came as a surprise to him and his fellows in the state legislature.

There is no need to repeat here the speeches of the meeting. Martin Luther King, in my view, is easily the most powerful and impressive public speaker in America today. Not only does he find the tone, rhythm and words of the popular orator; he also understands the need to raise the level of his audience. His speech contained a concise and clear summary of the best American historical thought on the cause and role of supremacist doctrine in social and economic terms. Finally the emotional peak of the long afternoon came after King's peroration when 25,000 people swayed back and forth singing "We Shall Overcome"; to find oneself linked on either side with two pretty, young Negro high school girls, who shyly looked out of the corners of their eyes, was worth the long hours of standing in the sun.

LATER, as evening came, I found myself at an integrated hotel in downtown Montgomery; but this was risky business. Gangs of young white toughs were already out on the streets looking for "strays." The restaurant waiter was openly aggressive, the groups of older whites in the lobby were abusing the newspaper and TV men staying in the hotel. My decision to leave abruptly was reinforced upon reading a bronze placard at the hotel's entrance announcing that upon this sacred spot Jeff Davis had been first proclaimed as head of the Confederacy.

Do not underestimate the significance of the Montgomery March. It dealt a smashing blow to the worst illusion of the hard-core South: that it can live along on myths of the past, that it can escape the harsh scrutiny of the rest of America. We marched, white and black, Northerners and Southerners, into the very bastion of racism; we came by the thousands, and stand ready to come again. The South will never again be the same. □

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Benjamin Schwartz

Modernization & Maoist Vision

Some Reflections on Chinese Communist Goals

What can be said at this point about the broad goals and motivations of the present Chinese Communists leadership? The question is, of course, distressingly imprecise and begs further definition. Is the leadership a monolithic group? Have its goals remained constant and unchanging? Is there a rigid Chinese Communist "goal structure," etc.?

On the question of leadership I shall simply adhere to the conventional hypothesis that Mao Tse-tung and those closest to him have played a leading role in determining basic policy shifts during the last 15 years. There may have been moments when his presence has receded from the center of the stage. In the early years after 1950, his role may have been somewhat inhibited by the awesome presence of Stalin. His influence may have flagged at the Wuhan meeting at the end of 1958 and after the retreat from the "Great Leap Forward." On the whole, however, one perceives the imprint of his outlook (probably developed in close collaboration with Liu Shao-ch'i) at almost every crucial turning point from the land reform campaign of 1950 to the present frenzied drive for "socialist education."

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On the matter of goals, while there is certainly no rigid static "goal structure," while the relationship among goals has undoubtedly been enormously complex, problematic, and shifting over time, it may nevertheless be possible to speak of a certain range of broad goals which has remained fairly constant and which may have set certain outer limits to the possibilities of policy choice. This does not mean, one should hasten to add, that the whole history of Communist China during the last 15 years can be understood in terms of an unproblematic implementation of the leadership's goals. Unyielding objective conditions, unforeseen events and contingencies, and the recalcitrances of human nature have certainly been just as decisive as the goals of the leadership in shaping the history of China since 1949. Interpretations of events in Communist China have often swung wildly from the view that China is inert clay in the hands of the leaders who shape it as they will to the view that everything that has happened is a result of an iron "objective necessity" which shapes all the leadership's decisions. All that will be urged in this article is that the goals of the leadership have been one of the factors shaping the course of events.

There has been much discussion of Chi-

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nese Communist goals during the last decade and a half and there is a certain range of broad assumptions which can be discerned in most analyses of the Chinese scene whether written by academic experts pouring over Chinese Communist media or visitors who have been there. One such widely shared assumption is that the overriding, indeed, all-embracing goal of the Chinese Communist leadership is to achieve the modernization of China or—put somewhat differently—everything that is happening in Communist China is an aspect of the process of modernization. There is also the assumption that the basic goal of the leadership is the achievement of a certain vision of society spelled out in the scriptures of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This vision may involve aspects of what is called "modernization" in the West, but modernization is conceived of as a part of a much larger whole defined by the ideology. This view of the goals of the leadership is, of course, the avowed view of the leadership itself but is also shared by many others who may be ardently attracted to the vision or violently repelled by it. Another view places central stress on nationalism—on the goal of national power and prestige and on the achievement of world power status as quickly as possible. It is of course true that to the protagonists of the modernization school nationalism is simply an "aspect" or "function" of some all-inclusive modernization process and hence not to be considered under a separate rubric. To others it must be considered as a force in its own right. There is another view which may be said to concern motivation more than goals—namely, that the Chinese Communist leadership is essentially engrossed in the limitless "totalitarian" aggrandizement of its own power, both within China and in the world at large. There are undoubtedly other assumptions which can and have been made concerning the goals and motives of the leaders, but I shall confine my attention to these.

Power

TURNING FIRST of all to the view that all the policies and decisions of the leadership are designed to maximize its power, we find that in recent years, particularly since the death of Stalin, there has been a distinct decline in the popularity of the "theory of totalitarianism" or all theories which stress the power drives of the leadership. There has, in fact, been a tendency on the part of some to brush aside the relevance of power considerations entirely on grounds which are a shade too facile. Power, we are told, is not an end in itself. It is functional to goals which lie beyond it or it plays a certain function in the larger social system, etc. It must always be explained in terms of "larger" social, historic and economic forces of which it is the mere instrument. One might say that for the whole course of human history power has always been "functional." It has always led to objective results, bad or good, which have survived its pursuit. This is just as true of Rameses and Ch'in Shih Huang-ti as it is of Mao Tse-tung. This by no means precludes the fact that it has also been pursued as an end in itself and that this pursuit has played its own role in human history. "Objectively" Macbeth may have been a most successful Scottish "state-builder" but this by no means proves that the side of him which Shakespeare chooses to depict is irrelevant to a discussion of his day-to-day political behavior. Power has always been functional and always been demonic and the end is not yet in sight. What vitiates the narrow "power approach" is the assumption that a concern with the maintenance or expansion of power is necessarily incompatible with the pursuit of more general goals. If the Chinese Communist party is conceived of as the sole effective instrument for achieving a certain vision of the good society or for making China a great world power or for consummating the process of modernization, then the general goals and power con-

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siderations may actually reinforce and enhance each other.

Those who deny the relevance of power considerations might at this point maintain, however, that if power considerations and objective goals often move in the same direction, why assign any particular causal weight to power considerations? In fact, however, at given points in time they may by no means move in the same direction. If one assumes that one of the basic domestic aims of the "Hundred Flowers" campaign was to provide the intelligentsia (a term which, of course, includes both professionals and academic and literary intellectuals) with an opportunity to participate more fully and freely in the economic and scientific development of China; if a reasoned judgment had been made that further economic and scientific development required the more positive participation of the intelligentsia, one can hardly say that the experiment was given time to prove itself. The fact that Mao Tse-tung was still vigorously supporting the program in February 1957 only to allow himself to be won over to the opposition (which had undoubtedly been strong in the Party from the outset) within the next few months can hardly be due to its failure to produce spectacular economic results in the early months of 1957. The drive was speedily terminated when it seemed to involve a threat to the unlimited political power of the leadership. Similarly, while the purges of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih in 1954 and of P'eng Teh-huai in 1959 undoubtedly involved policy differences from the outset, it is quite clear that in the end these "anti-party elements" were associated with a threat to power. The vehemence with which the ideological remolding of the army was carried on in the 1960–62 period can hardly be disassociated from this threat to power.

All of these instances, of course, involve not so much a concern for the expansion of power as for the preservation of power in being and it may well be one of the defects of the theory of totalitarianism that it dogmatically assumes that the concern for power must always be a concern for its maximization. It makes no allowance for the possibility that a concern for the maintenance of power in being may, at times, outweigh the concern for its maximization in the future. Nevertheless, the power approach reminds us that we are dealing with a group of men who know and savor power and its uses as much as any ruling group that has ever existed. They are not merely the embodiment of a social vision, or the destiny of China, or the process of modernization. Mao's spectacular projection of his own authority in the Communist bloc and the world at large and the present hysterical cult of Mao in China may serve a certain vision of the world or be in line with certain policies but also admirably feed his limitless *hybris*. The factor of power is relevant to a discussion of all these policies and shifts in policy. Indeed, at points where the implementation of policy may seem to endanger power interests, it may be the most relevant factor of all.

Modernization

IF THE EVER-PRESENT CONCERN with power by no means precludes the pursuit of broader goals—what are these broader goals? One widely accepted response is that the goal is the modernization of China. One could, of course, devote volumes to a discussion of the meaning of this term and yet there does seem to be a kind of common core of shared meaning which is implicit at least in most American discussions. In general, it tends to mean something approximating Max Weber's conception of the process of rationalization in all those spheres of social action—economic, political, military, legal, educational—which lend themselves to the application of *"Zwecksrationalität."* It involves the sustained attention to the most appropriate, "rational" and efficient methods for increasing man's ability to control nature and society for a variety of ends. Economists often treat it as being coextensive with in-

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dustrialization and it is indeed in this area that the meaning of the term "rationalization" can be most concretely elucidated. Weber himself in spite of his tendency to use the cover term "capitalism" (presumably an economic category) was just as much concerned with political bureaucracy, military development, and legal "rationalization." It tends to involve the notion of a highly developed division of labor or "functional specificity" with the corollary that men should have a degree of autonomy and authority within their various areas of competence. It also involves a stress on norms of universality rather than ascription and thus should involve social mobility—the opening up of careers to talents. Looking at the whole concept from the point of view of China, one is inclined to stress that it also may involve a sober respect for objective conditions. The technician and, for that matter, the professional bureaucrat will be very conscious of the limits imposed by his materials and by the imperatives of the situation within which he operates.

Actually one can distinguish two versions of the concept of modernization which may have quite different implications. One version treats the "process of modernization" as a vast, indeed an all-embracing, impersonal historic force. Revolutions, ideologies, nationalism, and the policies of governments are all surface eruptions of this underlying process which is independent of the wills of men and operates behind their backs very much like Hegel's *"Weltgeist"* or Marx's "mode of production." In the other version, modernization becomes a conscious project or consciously entertained goal of large or small groups of men. The two versions may have quite different consequences for an analysis of the behavior of the Chinese leadership. If modernization is an all-enveloping force which controls all the acts both conscious and unconscious of the leadership, all their acts must be explained as a "function" of the modernization process. The leadership may explicitly profess concern with other matters; it may even sincerely be concerned "subjectively" with other matters. In fact, all its behavior is determined by the imperatives of the modernization process. If, on the other hand, modernization is a goal consciously pursued, it is not impossible that it may compete in the minds of the leadership with other goals. In fact, the decisions of the leadership may have something to do with shaping the order of priorities and strategies of the modernization process itself.

The adherents of the monistic modernization theory seldom if ever raise questions about the goals of modernization itself. It is assumed that the goals are immanent in the process and that we know what they are. Among many Americans there is in fact the latent assumption that a fully modernized society will look exactly like the United States with all its social and cultural specificities. Even if we assume that modernization is leading in the end of days to some universal homogenized human condition, *in processu* it is quite compatible with quite different conceptions of the priority of ends to be served. A highly advanced industrial society may be able to lavish equal resources on state power and prestige and welfare. A less developed society will have to make choices in this area and these choices may have a most profound effect on the strategy of modernization.

Nationalism

VIEWED IN THIS LIGHT nationalism may be much more than a "function" of the modernization process. Where it occupies a central place, it may actually determine the strategy of modernization. To assume that Stalin's lop-sided emphasis on heavy industrial development was a function of Soviet nationalism seems to make much more sense than to assume that it was the only rational strategy of industrialization in an underdeveloped area. Similarly one must assume that the apparent priority granted to nuclear

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development in China through all the recent shifts in economic strategy is related fundamentally to its nationalist goals rather than to any obvious imperative of the modernization process.

The Chinese leadership's unquestioning adoption of this model after 1950 was due not simply to the fact that it was the orthodox Marxist-Leninist model of economic development but also to the fact that Stalin had in this model already bent Marxism-Leninism to national power purposes. As perfervid Chinese nationalists the Chinese leadership shared the preoccupations which lay behind Stalin's own choice of model. They were genuine Stalinists in their whole-hearted acceptance of Stalin's accommodation of Marxism-Leninism to the interests of a nation-state. It is thus entirely meaningful to stress that the speedy achievement of nationalist goals has been one of the unchanging central goals of the leadership which has shaped the priorities and strategy of the modernization process itself. This does not mean that the leadership is not committed to the welfare goals which we associate with modernization —with living standards, public health, literacy, etc.—but the relative priorities seem quite clear.

During the years from 1949–56 there can be little doubt that the goal of modernization *on the Soviet Model* was assiduously pursued by the Chinese Communist leadership in many sectors. After the Korean War we have a gradual implementation of the Soviet model of economic development. There is a movement toward the creation of a state structure with a modern bureaucratic apparatus and the professionalization of the army on a Soviet model is vigorously pursued. It has indeed become the tendency among some to regard this eminently Soviet phase of Chinese development as the "modernizing" phase *par excellence* as opposed to the irrationalities of subsequent phases. Yet as we know, the relationship of the whole Soviet development to the supposed prerequisites of modernization has itself been the subject of endless, unresolved debates. Ideology is also deeply implicated in the whole Soviet development. What is mainly implied is that the Soviet model involves a stress on professionalization, on a degree of autonomy for professional hierarchies, particularly in the industrial, state administrative, and military spheres. Franz Schurmann has, for instance, stressed the emphasis during this period on the Soviet conception of managerial responsibility in industry (without necessarily regarding it as preeminently rational).

One of the most striking facts of recent Chinese Communist history (particularly since 1956) has been the gradual departure from the Soviet model of modernization. Some have leaped to the conclusion that this marks the departure from a "rational" approach to modernization. Yet it might well be argued that, in part, the departure from the Soviet model of modernization was the result of the realization that this model was not applicable to China's real situation. The Chinese could not reduce the peasantry to a subsistence level and then ignore the agricultural sector. To keep their vast population alive at the barest subsistence level it became obvious that a maximum attention to agriculture was imperative. In the strictly economic sphere one might argue that the economic policy pursued after 1960 with its emphasis on "agriculture as the base" has been much more rational in terms of China's conditions than the model of the 1953–56 period. In fact, one might argue that during the whole period from the "Hundred Flowers" campaign to the present campaign for "socialist education" all policies have borne some relationship to the problems of modernization.

The Maoist Vision of the Good Society

IT NEVERTHELESS SEEMS to me that if we are to understand some of the modes of response to these problems which have

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emerged since 1956, we must introduce another broad goal area which might be called ideological but which I shall refer to as the Maoist vision of the good society.

The vision involves not only a conception of the good society of the future but also a sanctified image of the methods by which this vision is to be achieved. Certainly Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist ideology is one of the main sources of this vision, but this does not preclude the possibility that in some of its aspects it coincides with certain traditional Chinese habits of thought and behavior. It draws above all on the actual experience of the Communist movement during the '30s and '40s, and the interpretation of this experience enshrined in the Yenan writings of Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-ch'i. As has often been pointed out, the "Yenan syndrome" seems to occupy a central, hallowed place in the vision of Mao Tse-tung and most of the elements which form part of the Maoist vision first appear, at least in their embryonic form, during this period.

The phrase "Maoist vision" seems to describe a static frame of reference and almost suggests something like an "operational code" which may provide a key to all the shifts and twists of Party policy since 1949. On the contrary, there is absolutely no reason to assume that it provided Mao with any prevision of the circumstances which were to give rise to the "Hundred Flowers" campaign or the "Great Leap Forward" campaign, or to the circumstances which were to lead to their abrupt demise. Not all elements of the vision have been equally prominent at all times and some of them have only been made fully explicit in the course of time. Many elements of the vision are highly ambivalent ("dialectic") lending themselves to the support of quite opposing policies. And yet when viewed in the abstract, there is a kind of rough coherence among them.

Not only has the pursuit of this vision often cut across other goals of the leadership but it has with varying degrees of intensity conditioned the manner in which these other goals have been pursued. Some elements of the vision have had an obvious and almost unremitting impact on reality. The enormous energies invested since 1949 in the effort to achieve the spiritual transformation of the entire Chinese people whether in the form of "study" (*hsüeh-hsi*), "thought reform," "remolding," "education through labor," or "socialist education" is one of the most obvious instances. At another level, some elements of the vision have been invoked and made most explicit in connection with certain specific campaigns—such as the notion of "contradictions among the people" at the time of the "Hundred Flowers" campaign or the emphasis on "subjective forces," "revolutionary romanticism," and "man as the decisive factor" at the time of the "Great Leap Forward." One is tempted to say that, when invoked in this way, these ideological themes simply serve to confirm the infallibility of the "thought of Mao Tse-tung" in the face of all shifts and twists in line, and—particularly since 1956—to confirm ever more emphatically the autonomy and originality of the "Chinese path." Undoubtedly they do serve this purpose. Yet while these themes are hardly the "sufficient causes" of the campaigns of 1956, 1958, or other new departures, the genuine belief in the assumptions implicit in them may well explain the high confidence and élan with which these campaigns are pressed. One simply has to peruse Mao's comments in such works as *The Socialist Upsurge in China's Countryside* (1955) to appreciate the fervor of his belief in those "facts" which seem to support his vision. At another level, however, elements of the vision are obviously manipulated simply as ideology in the narrowest sense. Thus the fact that the slogans of the "Hundred Flowers" movement and the Great Leap continue to live on into periods when they no longer apply is obviously a device designed to prove that Mao's contributions to the storehouse of Marxism-Leninism are irrevocable and cumulative.

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Consensus and Collectivism

WHAT ARE SOME of the essential elements of the Maoist vision? There is first of all the overriding commitment to a society united by something approaching a total consensus and a society marked by radical collectivism. It may seem superfluous to speak of the collectivist goal of a Communist society, and yet the image of collectivity which has emerged in China, particularly since 1958, seems somewhat different in kind from that projected in the Soviet Union. The emphasis on the individual's total self-abnegation and total immersion in the collectivity as ultimate goods; the frequent reference to the model of military life with its nostalgic allusions to the heroic and idyllic guerrilla bands of the past are particular characteristics of the Maoist projection of the future. Lenin's own projection of utopia in *State and Revolution* still draws heavily on Marx's own meager and vague descriptions which, as we know, speak in terms of the total liberation and self-fulfillment of the individual. Whether this language makes Marx a sort of ultimate liberal, as some of his interpreters would have us believe, may be open to serious doubt, yet there is the fact that the individual and his situation does play a central role in Marx's utopia. While the Soviet official ideology has been as deeply suspicious of the whole notion of alienation in the young Marx as the Chinese, a somewhat crasser form of the concern with the interests of the individual can nevertheless be discerned in its projection of Communism. The Maoist version on the other hand projects a kind of collectivist mysticism. Commenting on the European and Soviet discussions of Marxism, Chou Yang states "that in advocating the return of Man to himself they are actually advocating absolute individual freedom and asking the people who live under Socialism to return to the human nature of bourgeois individualism and to restore the capitalism by which it is fostered." [1]

[1] *Peking Review*, "Fighting Task of Workers in Philosophy and Social Science," January 3, 1964.

Even more characteristic has been the enormous emphasis on the power of spiritual transformation (indoctrination seems to be far too weak a term) to bring about this society of collective man. The hope is that of a kind of internalized total consensus achieved mainly by spiritual methods. The ultimate roots of this emphasis may be sought in Lenin's own emphasis on the conscious factor (further extended by Stalin) perhaps fed to some extent by the Confucian faith in the power of moral influence. Its more immediate background is to be sought in the circumstances of the Yenan period when the methods of "remolding" were first applied to members and prospective members of the Communist party. The notion was later vastly extended to include the whole "people" including the "national bourgeoisie" however defined. The doctrine that all can be saved—even some "counter-revolutionary elements"—has, of course, always been heavily qualified by the retention of the class notion. People of the wrong classes are not easily transformed, and continue to generate poisons of wrong thought. Yet they *can* be transformed while those of good class background *can* be led astray. In the end the main criterion for assigning persons to the "people" or "non-people" is to be sought in their spiritual attitudes rather than in the facts of their class origin. The doctrine of salvation stresses simultaneously that almost all men may be saved; that salvation is enormously difficult for all men, and that backsliding is an ever present possibility. Paradoxically the emphasis on spiritual transformation may lend itself to quite disparate policies. The "Hundred Flowers" campaign may have been predicated on the genuine belief that the intelligentsia had been basically transformed during the 1949–55 period, while the "antirightist" campaign of 1957 was based on precisely the opposite assumption. The "Great Leap Forward" may have been based on the assumption that the "masses" (unlike the intelligentsia) had been basically transformed and that their "subjec-

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tive forces" were at the disposal of the leadership while the present campaign of "Socialist education" seems to be predicated on the assumption that there is still much work to be done.

"Populism"

THE EMPHASIS on spiritual transformation is closely linked to the "populist" theme. Because the whole people (defined as a union of four classes) can be transformed, the whole Chinese people can participate in the building of Socialism and Communism. This doctrine finds its formal institutional expression in the coalition structure of government, and can, of course, be harnessed to the nationalist goals of the regime as well as to project the Chinese model to the "emerging world" where there is such an obvious political need to "unite with whom one can unite." The obverse side of the formula—the notion that the "people" is not homogeneous but composed of different classes which still engender "non-antagonistic" (and even antagonistic) contradiction—has, however, been of equal importance. It has justified the need for constant vigilance and unremitting indoctrination, but was also used to justify the vaguely defined legitimate area of "blooming and contending" of the "Hundred Flowers" period. On this side, it is particularly closely linked to another element of the Maoist vision, namely, the enormous stress on struggle, conflict, and high tension as positive values. Mao Tse-tung's commitment to these values probably preceded his conversion to Marxism-Leninism and has, as we know, even colored his vision of the utopian future which he seems reluctant to think of in terms of stasis and total harmony. When directed against those defined as the outer enemy, struggle makes for solidarity "within the people." On another level, however, the enemy must be conceived of as ever present in the minds of the people itself in the form of "bourgeois thought." The struggle against this bourgeois thought is not only a negative factor. "Fighting against wrong ideas is like being vaccinated—a man develops greater immunity from disease after the vaccine takes effect. Plants raised in hothouses are not likely to be robust." [2] At the time when it was uttered, this doctrine was linked to the lenient policies of the "Hundred Flowers" period. One can easily see how the same doctrine can be given a much more draconic interpretation.

Another element of the vision which is closely linked to the emphasis on spiritual transformation and collectivity is the stress on man rather than weapons or tools as the "decisive force in history." By transforming men's minds and consolidating their collective energies one can achieve enormous results in spheres where others have relied on material power. Here again, the Yenan experience provides the shining example. Where one has mobilized the collective energies of men, motivated by the Maoist vision, economic advancement, national power, and social transformation are no longer purely dependent on "material prerequisites."

Another theme which has been stressed, with varying degrees of intensity, is the necessity of contact with the masses, and "participation in physical labor" on the part of intellectuals, students, professionals, and lower bureaucrats. This may reflect the genuine belief that "participation in labor" is a form of thought reform which will induce respect for physical labor and keep these elements from overweening pretensions. At the same time it is made crystal clear that one is not free to find among the masses any view of reality which contradicts the Maoist vision.

The Role of the Communist Party

FINALLY THERE IS the enormous pivotal role of the Communist party as the "proletarian"

[2] "Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," Bowie and Fairbank, *Communist China 1955–59* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 289.

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vanguard of society. Again, we seem to be dealing here with standard Marxist-Leninist doctrine, but as has been pointed out by many, the Party has probably played a more crucial and concrete role in China than in the Soviet Union at least during the lifetime of Stalin. The transformation of the Chinese people must be carried out by the Party. Ideally speaking, the Party maintains its supremacy not simply by dint of its organizational machinery but by its ability to internalize its "proletarian nature" into every party member. The "proletarian nature" of the Party no longer resides, of course, primarily in the industrial workers but has become a kind of spiritual essence embodied in the Party and yet still endowed with all those transcendental and universal qualities which Marx attributes to the working class. It is this idea of the "proletarian nature" of the Party which sets strict limits to the whole populist drift of the Chinese vision. In fact since the beginning of the Sino-Soviet conflict, the Party has stressed its proletarian nature more than ever. The Party does not derive its transcendent moral status and historic role in China or in the world at large from the fact that it merely represents the Chinese people, but from a higher source. The Party may serve the interests of Chinese nationalism but it does so from a supranational stance.

Within China itself the Party ought to be the nervous system of society and should play a commanding role in every sphere of social and cultural endeavor. The ideal Communist cadre is not only a paragon of selflessness but potentially omnicompetent. Ideally it is also the Party which is in direct communication with the "worker-peasant-soldier" masses and which reflects what the masses want and need or rather what they ought to want and need in a Maoist universe. Thus whenever there is a stress on the "mass line," one may assume that the decision-making function of the local Party faction is being stressed. Yet all of this still leaves open the possibilities that the Party ranks, as opposed to the Supreme leader, are vulnerable to error and backsliding.

Mao's Vision and Modernization

THESE IT SEEMS to me are some of the more salient elements of the Maoist vision. What have been the relations of this vision to the goal of modernization?

The official view of the present leadership is that the vision—no matter how its interpretation may fluctuate—not only provides the most effective means for achieving modernization, but is also an end in itself. The only desirable modernization is a modernization which can be incorporated into the Maoist vision. At the other extreme, we have the view that the vision runs completely athwart the prerequisites of modernization or that it is a sort of rationalization of the failures and difficulties of modernization in China. One makes a virtue of necessity according to this view because the necessity is intractable. Where weapons and capital are scarce what is to be lost in stressing the organization of human energies? Where material incentives are not available, why not stress the "Communist ethic"? Oddly enough, the official ideology also seems to stress the relation of necessity to virtue. It was, after all, the peculiarities of Chinese conditions which made possible the stress on guerrilla warfare. It is the "poverty and blankness" of China, Mao insists in 1958, which makes possible the achievement of Communism long before the insidious corruptions of capitalism and revisionism have set in. The fact that "virtue" is associated with necessity by no means implies that the belief may not be genuine and fervent, particularly since the belief is also linked to the power interests of the leadership.

Surveying the history of the People's Republic since 1949, we find that various elements of the vision play an enormous role in the enormous effort of the first few years to bring about political and ideological consolidation. "Study," "thought reform," "con-

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fession," etc., were applied on various levels not only to prospective Party members but to the "people" as a whole. The "small group" technique and the technique of mass organization were universally applied. The Party seemed to be proving that totalitarian consolidation of a people could be carried out effectively by relying on "man" rather than technology. Except for those defined as counterrevolutionaries and reactionaries, there was considerable reason for belief that the spiritual transformation was succeeding. Some parts of the vision seemed, and seem, to be quite compatible with certain aspects of modernization. Many tasks of public health, police work, social control, and even economic undertakings, which depend primarily on labor intensivity, lend themselves to Maoist methods.

The Relevance of the Soviet Model

HOWEVER, WHILE THE VISION did permeate large sectors of political and social activity, in the areas most crucial to the modernization effort—particularly as related to state power goals—it was the Soviet model which was followed. This involved some retreat in the concept of Party omnicompetence, considerable emphasis on a "rational" division of labor and professionalization, and some emphasis on the need for a professional state bureaucracy. This does not mean that one should see an absolute antagonism between the Soviet model of modernization and the Maoist vision. Obviously the gravitation toward the total nationalization of industry and the collectivization of agriculture was entirely in line with both. In fact, it may well have been high confidence and exuberance (as well as a desperate sense of haste) induced by the success of his vision in the political and social spheres which led Mao and those closest to him in 1955 to feel that collectivization could be speedily consummated in China without the dire effects it had produced in the Soviet Union. The fact remains, however, that on the whole Mao modestly deferred to the "superior experience" of the Soviet Union in these areas.

With the beginning of the "Hundred Flowers" experiment, the picture becomes more complex. On the one hand, the experiment seems to mark a further concession to the requirements of modernization. This can be discerned in the effect to give professionals and specialists a greater sense of security and freedom, in the rectification campaign directed against the Party with the implied admission that in some areas the specialists knew more than the Party and even in the new concern with legal codification. The campaign also seems to have coincided, however, with some dawning doubts about the complete applicability of the Soviet model of modernization to Chinese conditions. These doubts were certainly encouraged by the death of Stalin and the new winds blowing in the Communist bloc itself. This new emphasis on the requirements of modernization as well as the doubts about the Soviet model did not, however, necessarily diminish the role of the Maoist vision. On the contrary, the "Hundred Flowers" formula was presented as a precious new contribution of Mao Tse-tung (the first since 1949) to the storehouse of Marxism-Leninism and it is, of course, quite easy to see how many ambivalent elements of the vision lent themselves to the "soft" interpretation of this period. In fact, Mao may have genuinely believed that in the course of thought reform "the political outlook of the Chinese intellectuals has undergone a fundamental change." [3] The growing doubts about the complete applicability of the Soviet model of modernization may have even encouraged the view that the Maoist vision was applicable in areas where "Soviet experience" had hitherto reigned supreme.

In fact the "Great Leap Forward" and commune movement of 1957–1959 mark the high tide of the application of the Maoist

[3] Lu Ting-yi, "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom; Let a Hundred Schools Contend," Bowie and Fairbank, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

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vision to the very tasks of modernization. If the intelligentsia had shown its fundamental untrustworthiness, the subjective forces of the masses were still available for heaven-storming feats.[4] The emphasis on man as the decisive factor, on the negligible role of "material prerequisites," on the superior efficacy of collective subjective forces, and on the omnicompetence of the Party all enter into this experiment, and give it its utopian, apocalyptic flavor.

Contraction and Revival

THE RETREAT from the Great Leap in 1960–62 again seems to mark a return to a sober estimate of the requirements of modernization but no longer on an exclusively Soviet model. It also seems to mark a contraction in the influence of the Maoist vision even though the new economic model with its emphasis on "agriculture as the base" was quite distinctly Chinese. One may, in fact, argue as has been suggested that the modernization policies of this period are much more "rational" in terms of Chinese realities than the policies of the Soviet period. They have led, it would appear, to a substantial economic recovery. Yet, as we know, ever since the end of 1962 there has again been a rising crescendo of emphasis on "socialist education." At this very moment the Maoist vision, in one of its most extreme formulations, again occupies the center of the stage. The beginnings of this new revival are perhaps to be discerned in the crisis surrounding the army in the 1959–62 period. As we know, P'eng Teh-huai, who seems to have become the spokesman of military professionalism and perhaps of professionalism in general, had also become an "antiparty" element, that is a menace in the realm of power, while the crisis of morale in the army revealed in the *Bulletin of Activities (Kungs-tso T'ung-hsun)* documents suggested that the threat to the vision, at least in this sphere, was also regarded as a threat to power. Thus the campaign of "Socialist education" was begun very early in the army, and having been judged a success, we find the army projected as a model for society as a whole. Here again we note what Stuart Schram has called Mao's "military deviation"—his tendency to think of a well-indoctrinated army as providing a paradigm of Communist life.

The return of large numbers of students to the countryside involving as it did the frustration of hopes for advancement in urban society, also created a serious problem of morale, which seemed to call for drastic therapy in terms of spiritual transformation. Beyond this, the growing intensity of the Sino-Soviet conflict has strongly impelled the leadership to project the Maoist vision onto the world at large as the very embodiment of "true Marxism-Leninism."

Above all, however, there is the fact that the aging Mao and those closest to him are genuinely concerned with the survival of the vision. The whole current fervid campaign of "Socialist education" is permeated more by a kind of pervasive anxiety than by a mood of high confidence. The leadership may be quite optimistic about China's present economic situation and posture in the world at large, but it is precisely in the ideological sphere that one detects a mood of concern. The intelligentsia had shown its unreliability at the time of the "Hundred Flowers" campaign. Even the masses had shown their inability to live up to Mao's expectations at the time of the "Great Leap Forward." Indeed, it is now implied that the spontaneous inertial movement of things runs counter to the vision. "The restoration of capitalism," states Chou En-lai (and here he is undoubtedly the spokesman of Mao Tse-tung), "is not inevitable. In China we have a firm and fighting Marxist-Leninist Party, a proletarian Power which is increasingly consolidating itself, a powerful and revolutionary People's

[4] Whatever may have been the discontents revealed in 1956–57, the peasants had, after all, been collectivized without producing anything resembling the effects of collectivization in the Soviet Union.

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Liberation Army, an enormous number of cadres, a people of high political consciousness and a glorious revolutionary tradition. Of especial importance is the fact that our Party and State can count on a leading nucleus guided by the thought of Mao Tse-tung. All of this makes the restoration of capitalism very difficult in our country." [5]

There is here, of course, an oblique implication that the Soviet Union lacks these reassuring features. The whole thrust of the passage suggests, however, that what mainly stands between China and the "restoration of capitalism" is the Maoist vision. It is noteworthy that there is no reference to the "Socialist structure" of Chinese society as one of the factors preventing such a restoration.

While the "Socialist education" campaign has, however, fallen with an enormous weight on the literary, artistic, and cultural spheres and perhaps on all nonvocational areas of social life, while the cult of Mao has been raised to unprecedented heights, it is still not clear whether it has again been allowed to affect the strategy of modernization, particularly in the economic sphere. In fact, one may speculate that in the areas of highest priority—such as nuclear development—the Maoist vision has never been allowed to interfere with the requirements of technology. As far as one can judge at the present, experts are now expected to be diffused with Redness even while devoting a maximum of attention to expertise and the system of higher education is more oriented than ever to the production of experts. Yet all this may change. It would certainly be the gravest of errors to assume that because the 1960 economic strategy has proven fairly successful, economic considerations will necessarily override the concern with the "succession to the revolutionary heritage."

The leadership's concern is probably justified. It is difficult to believe that the vision will survive at least in its present extreme form. It is difficult to believe not only, or even primarily, because in some of its aspects it runs counter to the requirements of modernization. Even more immediately, it involves such a constricted and terribly simplified view of human life that one is inclined to doubt whether it is humanly viable. In terms of modernization, however, it is difficult to believe that the vision will be allowed in the long run to interfere particularly with those aspects of modernization most relevant to the achievement of national power. While the vision may retreat, however, we are in no position to foresee the extent of the retreat or to predict what will remain. Modernization may not be fully compatible with the Maoist vision but neither has it been fully compatible with Jeffersonian democracy. China may depart from the Maoist vision yet still move into a future uniquely its own. As long as Mao and those close to him remain at the helm, we may expect them to be as much concerned with the vision as with any of the other goals of the regime. □

[5] "Report on the Work of the Government," *Peking Review*, January 1, 1965.

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Joseph Buttinger

The Colonial Heritage in Vietnam

The heritage of colonialism in Vietnam is Communism. The strength of the Communist party of Vietnam is a unique phenomenon in the devolping world. Vietnam was the only country where a Communist-led government was established at the end of World War II without the kind of outside help the Red Army gave to the Communist parties of Eastern Europe.

From this follows a still unrecognized and therefore startling truth: *The loss of Vietnam to Communism occurred in 1945.* All the fighting that has been going on there for the last 20 years has aimed at reversing this historical fact.

There is no evidence at all for an innate disposition of the Vietnamese people to favor Communist ideas. Communist strength is the result of historical conditions—economic, social, and political conditions peculiar to Vietnam and created by the colonial regime.

Colonial Vietnam had only a small industrial labor force. The social basis of Communist strength was the rural masses constituting 85 percent of the population. They were not land-owning peasants interested in maintaining their status and therefore politically conservative. By creating, particularly in South Vietnam, a system of feudal landholdings, the colonial regime had gradually destroyed the traditional class of land-owning peasants. Colonialism transformed the rural masses into agricultural laborers, landless peasants working as tenants for landlords, and poor peasants without sufficient land. All were ruthlessly exploited by the landlords, the moneylenders, and the taxation policy of the colonial regime. Land rents robbed the tenant of up to 50 percent of his crop. Of the price at which rice was sold by the Saigon exporters, the peasant's share was 12 percent. Any movement that promised these people an end to their inhuman conditions of existence was bound to gain their support. For reasons also peculiar to Vietnam, this was done only by the Communists.

ANOTHER CAUSE of Communist strength was the condition of existence which the colonial regime had created for the country's educated elite. In Vietnam, education had always been not only the primary source of prestige but also a road to power. Under the colonial regime, the elite of the nation was deprived of both prestige and power. Thousands of young Vietnamese, mostly sons of landlords and mandarins, received a higher education, but were not given an opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills. No opportunities existed for them in business, commerce, or industry, activities virtually closed to the Vietnamese. The modern sectors of the economy, as far as they existed, were in French and Chinese hands. A small number of intellectuals were allowed to enter the

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colonial administration, but under conditions materially unsatisfactory and morally degrading. Others worked as teachers, journalists, lawyers, and doctors, but many remained unemployed, and all were deeply frustrated because the colonial regime also deprived them of any kind of political voice. Ninety percent of the prominent Viet Minh leaders came from this class of people.

Colonial Vietnam never developed a middle class in the Western sense, a class of property-owning natives opposed to radical social movements. This too was a result of a colonial policy which held back the development of industry and excluded the Vietnamese from participating in trade and commerce. There was virtually no Vietnamese capitalism, no Vietnamese bourgeoisie. Capitalism was foreign, an alien power engaged in exploiting the land and the people, and therefore opposed by all patriots striving to free Vietnam from foreign rule. The people who most consistently expressed this national sentiment were of course the Communists.

The absence of a solidly conservative peasantry, of a property-owning middle class, and of a socially satisfied intelligentsia meant that the country lacked the social basis for moderate democratic movements interested in maintaining or improving the *status quo*. Whoever was awakened to political consciousness sooner or lated aimed at overthrowing not only the colonial regime but also the social order it had created. A political movement based on a strong native middle class would of course also have fought for national liberation, but it would have been opposed to social revolution. Since such a class was practically nonexistent, all nationalist movements tended to embrace socialistic ideas. This was true even for an authoritarian conservative like Ngo Dinh Diem.

MOST EFFECTIVE in directly promoting Communist strength were the political conditions French colonialism had created for all existing nationalist movements. Only procolonial attitudes could be freely expressed. Movements organized by moderate middle-class nationalists were as brutally suppressed as was the Communist party. No trade unions were allowed. Nationalist movements could operate only clandestinely, in an atmosphere essentially hostile to the development of democratic ideas. The most moderate nationalists, forced underground, hunted by the police, condemned to death or to endless years of concentration camp, ended up by becoming radicals, believers in revolutionary action and in the necessity of fighting the colonial regime with force. No one expressed this necessity more consistently than the Communists, who constantly attracted the most determined elements of all the nationalist groups.

The Communists alone possessed certain advantages essential for the survival of illegal organizations. They had a wealth of experience and skills in underground work, and highly sophisticated theories about it, which had been tested in Russia and elsewhere over a long time. They had schools to train people engaged in secret political activities. These schools were conducted abroad, where the Communists permanently kept a reserve of *cadres*. They also had support from the Soviet Union. No other group enjoyed any of these advantages. Who in the Western world showed an interest in the national aspirations of the Vietnamese people, let alone supported them? France, the only democratic country that knew about these potentially democratic movements, was engaged in destroying them.

Furthermore, the Communists were the only ones who knew that a successful revolution against the colonial regime required organization of the masses. Nationalist intellectuals who lacked Communist political training clung to the century-old view of Vietnam's elite, which was that public affairs were matters reserved to the educated; the masses were not ripe for political action,

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and had no significant part to play in the national liberation of Vietnam. Only the Communists trained *cadres* for organizing the masses. When the revolution broke out in April 1945, only the Communist party had people who spoke in support of the Viet Minh to the rural masses in the villages all over the country. They did not speak of Communism; the aims of the revolution were declared to be national liberation and moderate social reforms. In the absence of any organized forces to oppose them, the Communist leaders gained the support of almost the entire nation before one month had elapsed. They were solidly in power when the anti-Communist leaders arrived a few weeks later from their exile in China, together with the unwelcome [nationalist] Chinese armies of occupation.

But the colonial regime went even further in its promotion of Communism. After having reconquered the Southern half of Vietnam, the French, in exchange for permission to station army units in the North, recognized the Ho Chi Minh government at Hanoi with an agreement in March 1946. When the anti-Communist nationalists, in an attempt to exploit popular opposition to the return of the French army, fiercely attacked this agreement, the French cooperated with the Communists in destroying all nationalist groups opposed to the Viet Minh regime. The French were of course not "pro-Communist"; they knew that their compromise with Ho Chi Minh would end in armed conflict, but they did not want the anti-Communist groups as their opponents in the government of Vietnam. They preferred to present the war against the Vietnamese national revolution as a war against Communism.

French colonial policy, by provoking the Indochina War, again contributed to the popularity of Vietnamese Communism. The Viet Minh government became the symbol of national resistance to colonialism. Most nationalists supported the armed struggle against the French led by the Viet Minh. This is why Ho Chi Minh became Vietnam's great national hero.

During the Indochina War, the French could have helped weaken the Communists' hold on the nationalist movement by granting a non-Communist regime what the Vietnamese people were fighting for, which was not Communism but national independence. Instead, the French colonialists set up a corrupt puppet regime under the former emperor Bao Dai, discrediting the cause of anti-Communist nationalism, and enhancing once more the prestige of the Hanoi regime. This failure to take proper political action led, in turn, to the military defeat of the French at the hands of the Viet Minh. During the war the French had denounced the entire resistance movement as Communist; when it triumphed, the Vietnamese naturally gave the Communists most of the credit. The prestige of the Hanoi government was immense. Its popular support and military strength were such that it could probably have thrown the French out of Indochina and extended its power over the whole of Vietnam. Communist control was limited to the North of Vietnam only by the international circumstances that induced the Western and Eastern powers to conclude, and impose upon the Viet Minh, the compromise reached at the conference of Geneva.

WHY THE GOVERNMENT established in the South in 1954 failed to break the power of the Communists is another story. This is a failure not only of Vietnamese anti-Communism but also of the United States. Basically, it came about because in too many social and political areas the Diem regime did not liquidate the colonial heritage. It did not create a land-owning peasantry immune to Communist propaganda; it did not oppose organized Communism by creating democratic mass movements, but decided to fight it with police and army; it treated its democratic opponents as they had been treated by the colonial regime, denouncing

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them as Communists and throwing them into jail. Instead of turning South Vietnam, with United States help, into a country that might seem attractive to the people both in the South and the North, the Diem regime relied for its survival on force.

Many of these colonial conditions still persist under the tutelage of the United States. It would of course be absurd to impute colonial motives to American intervention in Vietnam. But there are still more than merely shades of the colonial heritage in the views and actions which describe United States policy in South Vietnam. If there is still, as under the colonial regime, a total neglect of social and political reform, the United States must accept part of the blame for this. The present regime of South Vietnam, which could not exist without American support, is politically just as ineffective against the Communists as was the Bao Dai regime under the French. We too, like the French, act as if military force alone could defeat Communism. We too use napalm, condone torture, kill innocent civilians by bombing and burning villages. We treat the National Front for the Liberation of the South as the French treated the Viet Minh—as a solid Communist bloc, and, like the French, we refuse to negotiate with the people whom we are fighting. However, what reminds the Vietnamese more than anything else of their colonial past is that the Saigon regime, like that of Bao Dai, would collapse overnight if foreign armies were not again on Vietnamese soil.

If we rely on force, it must be because we either do not know the means required to defeat Vietnamese Communism politically, or we are afraid to apply them. Our force is probably sufficient to prevent the Communists from winning this war. At the risk of starting a larger conflict, we may even succeed in defeating the enemy, but we can defeat him only under one condition: we must summon up the inhuman determination to destroy the country, wiping out most of its unfortunate people.

As long as the colonial heritage in Vietnam is not liquidated by a socially progressive regime, the people of South Vietnam will continue to expect the Communists to perform this urgent historical task. □

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Lionel Abel

So Who's Not Mad?

On Marat/Sade and Nihilism *

It was Susan Sontag, I think, who first pointed up the extreme theatricality of *Marat/Sade*. Susan Sontag was right, *Marat/Sade* is theatrical. Is the play dramatic, though? About this there seems to be some question in even Miss Sontag's mind. When she discussed the work in her *Partisan Review* article (Spring 1965), the word "dramatic," scarcely used in her text, came up in this sentence: ". . . *Marat/Sade* is far from being the supreme masterpiece of contemporary dramatic literature, but it is scarcely a second-rate play." From which I infer that Miss Sontag herself has doubts as to the value of *Marat/Sade* as drama. My own opinion—which has the virtue at least of being settled—is that the play is indeed a "director's play," and owes most of its values of excitement and bravura to the staging and direction of Mr. Peter Brook. Whatever life *Marat/Sade* has on the stage comes, in my finding, from the devices of its director, not its author.

One could not say this were the play truly compelling. For certainly a play not soundly dramatic can do little more than hold its audience; the devices of a director can merely make a play bearable. To me, *Marat/Sade* was certainly bearable, but little more than that, except for a few moments. The first part was often tedious, and the second part a repetition of what is boring in the first. But what concerns me here is a general point, the difference between the theatrical and the dramatic.

When we find Marat on the Martin Beck stage, half of his body is enclosed in a metal bathtub, and the naked flesh of him that we do see is covered with large red spots. There he is, immobile, frail and blotched in his bath, stained by his disease. Now the effect is electric. But this effect lasts only for a moment, for Marat is going to speak. We want to hear what he says. And as we listen, we tend not to look at his red spots; but what he says is less interesting than the red spots, much less interesting humanly, much less interesting dramatically. His voice, which often rises to an orator's shout, somehow erases the strong effect the sight of his body first gave us. His is a theatrical presence, not a dramatic one.

To point up the contrast between the theatrical and the dramatic, one has only to think for a moment of Danton in Buechner's play, *Danton's Death*. The real Danton, the Danton of history, was pockmarked but

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* *The Persecution and Assassination of Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum at Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade.* Play by Peter Weiss. Directed by Peter Brook. Martin Beck Theater, New York.

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Buechner in the directions for his work never insisted on representing him as such. For what interests us in the Danton of Buechner are things Danton says, and were he presented with a pockmarked visage, the force of his lines would limit, make one forget, or even quite destroy, I think, any theatrical value his appearance with a pitted skin might have, just as the feebleness and platitudinousness of Marat's lines in *Marat/Sade* tend, as that play goes on, to destroy the theatrical effect our first sight of Marat, spotted and in his bathtub, gave. I suggest that the theatrical is something very different from the dramatic, and that it is finally dependent on the dramatic. A play in which the first is substituted for the second will tend to lose whatever value, as it goes on, it had at the start. This is what happens in *Marat/Sade*. Highly theatrical at the outset, never becoming dramatic, as it progresses it loses its theatricality. And not because the theatrical is contrary to the dramatic or in some sense its opposite. The theatrical sums itself up in one moment of time whereas the dramatic links into a culminating action many moments of time. When we speak of a *coup de théâtre* we have in mind an event that combines the theatrical with the dramatic, but the *coup de théâtre* simply cannot take place if some dramatic development has not prepared it. Now there is no *coup de théâtre* in the utterly theatrical play of Peter Weiss. In fact, the most theatrical thing about this play is its full title, which takes up about a minute's reading time. Read it: *The Persecution and Assassination of Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum at Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade*.

The idea that Sade might put on a play to be performed by the inmates of a lunatic asylum, and that in this play he and Marat might be the leading characters, is certainly a fascinating one suggesting a real drama. But no drama takes place in Peter Weiss's play. Sade tries to convert Marat, who does not listen to him. Why would he listen to the platitudes of sadism? Marat, totally unresponsive, declaims, in his turn, the political platitudes to which he remains committed. There is no yielding of one to the other, consequently there is no dramatic play between them. The author has said that the center of his play is an argument. Now I heard none. For in any true argument there is always a moment of wavering on the part of the one or the other. But in *Marat/Sade,* the Marquis is scarcely beguiling, and Marat never gives any indication of being beguiled.

SOME, including Miss Sontag, have found a great theatrical interest in the fact that almost everyone on the stage is mad. I am inclined to think that this reveals in those who take such a view an ideological interest in the mad rather than an aesthetic or even psychologically normal response to madness. Anyone who has ever had a discussion with another person, and noted or suspected at some point that the other was mad, must recall that with that thought or suspicion there was an immediate tendency to break off discussion. For one cannot know what a lunatic is thinking or feeling and the normal impulse is to detach oneself from any consideration of what may go on in his mind. And so it follows, however surprising this may be to some people, that madmen, though theatrical, are fundamentally undramatic and do not properly belong on the stage. A moment of madness, yes, particularly as expressed by someone whom we have seen as sane before, can have dramatic interest, and of course a sane man pretending madness is interesting. But real madmen, or persons presented as really mad, do not belong in any theater attended by people with a taste for drama.

Yet I must admit that the audience at the Martin Beck Theater does not reason as I do, and does not feel as I do. During the last moments of *Marat/Sade,* when the inmates of Charenton threw off all restraints and went berserk, there was an unmistakable feeling of solidarity with them on the part of

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the audience, so that for some moments I half expected whole groups to get up on stage and add their own versions to the outrageous "twist" Peter Brook designed. Why this fellow feeling for the mad? In answering this question, one can perhaps find some reason for the very great success of Peter Weiss's play.

Now the play is quite devoid of any intellectual meaning. Is Weiss trying to say that the content of history is sadism? This judgment might indeed make a play, and a challenging play, though I think the judgment false. In any case, Weiss has denied that this is his judgment. He asserts, "Everything irrational and absurd is foreign to me." He claims, also, to side with the platitudinous opinions utttered by Marat. Of course, none of Weiss's statements about his play need be taken seriously. In public interviews he has on the one hand described himself as a socialist, and on the other hand said that he considers socialism a failure. Such indecisiveness of judgment is hardly the sign of a superior sensitiveness to what, after judging, may remain ambiguous. Very probably, we can only learn about what is unresolvably ambiguous in politics and morals from someone whose moral and political position is clear. Certainly it would be unfair to confront Weiss's play with masterpieces like Dostoevsky's. Nevertheless, the art of the Russian novelist did settle one question (there are some questions that have been settled) now being called upon by the partisans of *Marat/Sade,* notably its director, Mr. Peter Brook. What Dostoevsky's work proved, to those, of course, who know how to read him, is that one can choose finally—Dostoevsky chose Christ as against science and socialism—and yet acknowledge with full awareness all that is valid in what one rejects. No reader can be in doubt of Dostoevsky's judgment; he denies no reader a taste of the ambiguous. Bad or inconclusive thinking is hardly the best, or even a good way, to apprehend ambiguities.

But why the enthusiasm for *Marat/Sade?* Here, I think, we have to turn aside from the aesthetics of drama and look to the ideological motives of the play.

Let me go back to the frenetic response of certain members of the audience to the final scene of *Marat/Sade.* In that response there was a clearly articulated sympathy for madness. What sustains so peculiar, and to my mind unnatural, a sympathy?

Do people tend to think now that history is a madhouse? Or, to cite again Joyce's much-quoted phrase, a nightmare? In that case, why would they not want to wake up from it? I must also point out, that, when any strikingly leftist remark was made on the stage, the very same members of the audience who solidarized themselves with the stage's madmen again came to life with clapping and cheers. So there was a feeling in the theater for leftism plus madness, and I think this feeling is expressed in the play itself, whose two chief protagonists have the names Marat and Sade.

I suggest that the play appeals generally to those who have violent leftist notions and yet, like the author, think socialism a failure. In madness, one can combine such ideas.

However, the interest in madness presently expressed, and by a good many talented and intelligent people, may go far beyond the need to conciliate political leftism with despair of socialism. The frantic, the frenetic, the wild and outrageous are continually being stated as positive values nowadays, in literature, in the films and on the stage. I recently saw an extremely clever French film in which the goal of the hero—he achieves it—is schizophrenia. The film is light, intelligent, ironical, and in that way pays tribute to French rationality, but it is an ironic tribute, for the real appeal of the film is in the figure of its protagonist finally at home in the white walls of an asylum. And if one correlates with a film of this kind, the various expressions of hysteria, irra-

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tional violence, homosexual hatred, and sheer nuttiness regularly expressed by our youngest writers, one has to look more deeply into what may have caused or promoted what now amounts to a powerful trend.

I have in mind *The White Negro,* that wacky though powerful essay by Norman Mailer, in which our genial friend and Marxist gone haywire singled out psychopaths as the bearers of future values. In this piece, he also defended the courage of some tough young kids who beat up a weak old man. Now there was a time when courage was understood very differently. Not a few French knights in feudal times thought it unmanly to engage in combat when not outnumbered. I also have in mind Mailer's recent novel, *The American Dream,* in which the protagonist, Rojack, kills his wife and then immediately afterwards buggers their maid. I must note here that the deed is a variant of one in Jean Genet's *Querelle de Brest.* In that novel the young sailor Querelle, having killed a man, feels that he ought to pay for his crime, and has himself buggered by the local pimp. Thus buggered, Querelle becomes a marked man, an *enculé,* and for all eternity. So Querelle does not entirely escape the mark of Cain. Except that the mark Cain had to bear on his forehead is kept hidden by Genet's hero in his ass. Now Mailer's American hero, who kills as if Cain had never existed, appears, after his crime, like an innocent abroad; he has no feeling of guilt, no need for expiation. And how was Mailer's novel understood? When Philip Rahv attacked the book insofar as its hero is without any kind of conscience, his objection was met with derision, as if it were absurd to judge a fictional character morally! As if the best of our critics had not done just that, and ever since the novel came into being.

OR TAKE Leslie Fiedler's article, *The Mutants,* published in the Fall 1965 *Partisan Review.* I heard Mr. Fiedler give that essay as a lecture at a conference at Rutgers University and so I can supply some additional data which may throw light on Mr. Fiedler's purposes; these, from his essay as published, may be unclear. In his essay, and also in his lecture, Mr. Fiedler quoted a contemporary kid as having said to him: "Freud is a fink." Now what interested Mr. Fiedler was not whether this judgment was true or false. What interested him was that a kid should say this, and I submit that if you look at Mr. Fiedler's article you will see that he is inclined to accept the kid's judgment. Why? At Rutgers Mr. Fiedler said in so many words, though I quote from memory—but there is a transcript of the discussion which may be checked—: "I myself have become as tired of the rationalism of Freud as of Marx." Is Freud then really a fink? And why did the young man Fiedler cited say so? The answer to this is not hard to find. Norman Brown, who has had a very great impact on many of our very young men, says in his now famous book that the insistence of many conventional American males on satisfying women sexually is a form of repression stemming from Freud, and something to be rejected in the name of freedom. So even fucking, in other words, is to Mr. Brown and to the young enlightened by him a bit too classical, just too upstanding!

I want to say something further about Mr. Fiedler's essay. According to him, the taking of drugs by the young is their expression, and main expression, of dissatisfaction with a boring and spiritually flat society. I will not go so far as to say that Mr. Fiedler recommends that the young take drugs, but I suggest that no one whose children are engaged in taking drugs should call on Mr. Fiedler to dissuade them from doing so. To take drugs, according to him, is to be an adventurer, and in a society in which little adventure is possible. It is to travel inward, something very up-to-date, like the up-to-dateness of the cosmonauts who go toward outer space. Once again, I do not want to charge Mr. Fiedler with recommending the

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taking of drugs, but I think his whole essay is a confession that he cannot call upon one value in whose name he could oppose it. Why?

When there is a real trend, and I think I am talking about a real trend here, one has to look for something deeper to explain it than the views of those who represent it verbally, even with cleverness. It is not enough to call names as Philip Rahv did in his review of Norman Mailer's *The American Dream.* Nor is it enough to argue politically with the youth, as Irving Howe did in his article on the "New Left." Call Mailer foolish or a bad novelist—the last he is not—and the young will still listen to him. Call the "New Left" ahistorical, as Irving Howe did in his essay, and the young will reply—they already have replied—with violence. Philip Rahv and Irving Howe are perfectly right, of course, but I can't help remembering Hegel's remark about Rome in its decadence. The philosophers were right, Hegel said, but the people were right not to listen to them.

Once again, what can be understood to lie behind the not always clear inclination of the contemporary youth for all forms of the irrational?

More than fifteen years ago, in Alexandre Kojève's extraordinary book, *An Introduction to the Reading of Hegel,* a work which has influenced all French thought, including Sartre's and Merleau-Ponty's, I read the following remarkable passage, the full meaning of which I confess not to have understood at the time and which I am here translating rather freely:

> Philosophy has no sense or reason for being unless it can lead to Wisdom, or at least to the Sage, that is to say, to the Man of Wisdom. On the other hand, to believe that the Sage or Man of Wisdom is possible is to necessarily accept philosophy, understood as a means of attaining Wisdom, of realizing the Sage. . . .
>
> Now on the question of the Sage the only fundamental disagreement is between Plato and Hegel. . . . Let us see what their disagreement amounts to. One can of course, with Plato, deny that Wisdom can be realized. Then we have an either/or. Either the ideal of the Sage is never and nowhere realized, and the Philosopher is simply a madman who pretends to be what he *knows* it is impossible to be. Or he is not a madman; and then his ideal of Wisdom is or will be realized, and his definition of the Sage or Man of Wisdom is or will be a truth.

But to deny the existence of wisdom realized, either in God, as with Plato, or in man, as with Hegel, means, according to Kojève, to say that the philosopher is a madman—in other words, that there is no difference between the madman and the philosopher. (One might add, between the philosopher and the criminal, and between the philosopher and the dope addict.) The point of view expressed here, and which is so pertinent, in my opinion, to our contemporary problems, may be summed up as follows: either God exists and perfection on earth is not required, or God does not exist and human life can be perfected. That is, philosophy is a reasonable pursuit. But if God does not exist (contrary to Plato), and if wisdom cannot be realized (contrary to Hegel), then the madmen, the criminals and dope addicts are as reasonable as the philosophers, and even more reasonable insofar as they do not attempt to philosophize.

NOW, THE final deliverance of this epoch is that God does not exist and that human life cannot ever be perfected and hence that the madman, the criminal, and the dope addict are not inferior to the philosopher. That is why it is so difficult to argue with a young student against taking drugs, not to speak of dissuading him from doing so. Can one say to him that God exists? No. Can one say to him that society can be perfected? No. (It will not do, according to Kojève, to say that society can be somewhat improved.) Then can one say that the philosopher is better than the drug addict? No. Or better than the

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criminal or the madman? Again no. It is the vague recognition, I will not call it knowledge, that no one to be respected can answer these questions affirmatively which emboldens our contemporary youth and makes them so rash and so sad.

Obviously our dilemma was not new in the Russia of the 1860s. What is new, though, is the impact on a mass society of the issue of belief which Dostoevsky raised. Do we today believe in God or in man? And by "we" I mean the masses, I mean the many, the millions. For there are many Raskolnikovs among us and many more Rojacks. In fact, to appreciate fully the effect on the masses of our spiritual dilemma and the receptivity of present-day society to any and all answers, no matter how drastic, one has only to think of a contemporary Dr. Raskolnikov giving a seminar on the Double Meaning of Killing Two Pawnbrokers, or of a Dr. Rojack lecturing at an honored university on Why It Is Not Wrong to Kill One's Wife. Say that Norman Mailer is no Dostoevsky, who's going to say he is? But to say that he is not is to discriminate, and the whole question now is whether discrimination is valid. As for Mailer, his excesses in thinking were prophesied, I believe, in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. When Bloom, about to fall asleep, plays with variations on the name Sindbad, calling up Ninbad the Nailer, Tinbad the Tailor, and Binbad the Bailer, he suddenly becomes less lethargic, somewhat more caustic, and gets to the name we know and he didn't: our contemporary to him is Mindbad the Mailer.

But never mind Mindbad. The question is not whether Mailer is intelligent, but whether intelligence counts any more. The argument for intelligence, that is for philosophy—and by philosophy I mean the taking up of any topic, art, morals or politics, with a sincere intent to be reasonable—was, I once thought, stated forever by Aristotle. He said: if you want to philosophize, then let us philosophize; and if you don't want to philosophize, you still have to philosophize. But who in philosophy feels he has to philosophize nowadays?

In fact, our young philosophers are dulled, I believe, by their aim, which is only to be bright, that is, brighter than other philosophers. And the brightest and most intolerable of all philosophers in recent times was Ludwig Wittgenstein, who said against philosophy what no philosopher ever said before him: Philosophy is Hell. For why undertake the great labor of reasoning if reason is futile, if wisdom is unrealizable, and if the philosopher is no better than the madman, the criminal, or the addict? Why? Genet is a problem to Sartre, the philosopher, who devoted a book of over 600 pages to explaining him. Sartre, as all the young know now, is no problem to Genet.

But to get back to Weiss's play. It is my assumption that the depth of the contemporary situation is there and present whenever the least conscious members of the audience at *Marat/Sade* respond to that work as they do and empathize with its moments of madness. I know I could argue with them about the aesthetics of drama, dispute and even refute their notions of taste, but how am I going to refute their spontaneous identification with the mad figures tumbling convulsively at the play's end across the stage? □

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David Spitz

Pure Tolerance: A Critique of Criticisms

Ever since men climbed down from the trees and found it necessary to establish ground rules, they have fought over what those rules shall be. They have fought longest, and perhaps most bitterly, over the most fundamental rule of all—the rule by which the ground rules themselves shall be determined. For he who controls the ground rules is in a position to control the game.

That the rule of tolerance is this fundamental rule is revealed by the fact that dictatorships exclude it and democratic states make it central to their enterprise. Only in democratic states are governments established and changed in response to the free play of conflicting opinions.

This—the securing of responsible government—is not of course the only reason for supporting tolerance. Those who defend it also contend that tolerance makes for diversity, which is essential to progress and the development of individuality, and thus to the common good. They also believe that tolerance, at least in a pluralist society, is the only principle under which diverse groups can live together without resorting either to mutual slaughter or to an authoritarian regime that will impose one group's creed on others.

The argument for intolerance, in contrast, is generally put forward by men who mean to have their way but fear that free discussion will "mislead" other men—either because those others are less wise or virtuous than they or because conditions are such as to favor the false doctrine.

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Now, the classic case for tolerance has been set forth in John Stuart Mill's celebrated essay *On Liberty*. Ever since Mill published that essay in 1859, the critics of tolerance have been diligently at work refuting him. It needs to be said, if unkindly, that one obvious reason for this is that later critics have recognized the difficulties that earlier critics have had with him. It is a mark of no mean significance that this process still continues; indeed, it has become the foundation of a flourishing industry.

As a part-time member of this guild (though one essentially in sympathy with Mill), I can do no other than commend it to the newcomers. I ask only that they first familiarize themselves with already-existing products. Then they might spare their readers, if not themselves, the labor of reencountering ancient formulations under the guise of a new suit of phrases; and in doing so they might also learn to distinguish reputable from shoddy merchandise. For it needs also to be said that much of what is produced by this industry today is neither novel nor imagina-

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tive nor important. That is the judgment I propose in regard to a new book, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance,* co-authored by Herbert Marcuse, Barrington Moore, and Robert Wolff.*

What distinguishes the three essays that constitute this book is *not* an awareness, and hence transcendence, of these elementary considerations. It is rather the marshalling and occasionally the revision of old arguments to attack Mill from what might (for the moment) be called radical perspectives. Traditionally, Mill has been identified with the Left and his critics with the Right. This ideological cleavage by no means accounts for all of Mill's critics; some of them—Dorothy Fosdick, J. C. Rees, and Isaiah Berlin, for example—have dealt with Mill and his arguments in terms divorced from such partisanship. But it accounts for a good many of them, including, I venture to think, the three critics who here attack Mill's plea for complete freedom of thought and expression on the ground, so they say, that it prevents, or at the very least militates against, the supremacy of "correct" ideas, that is, "their" ideas. And because they profess to be of the radical Left, Mill stands condemned (in their eyes) as a protagonist of the "wrong" ideas, as a purveyor of a political philosophy that safeguards the *status quo.*

The keynote of their argument—on which, despite other differences, they are agreed—is contained in this introductory sentence: "For each of us the prevailing theory and practice of tolerance turned out on examination to be in varying degrees hypocritical masks to cover appalling political realities." And here I must begin with a confession of inadequacy: I have tried, but I am unable to make sense of this statement. What, apart from its strident terminology, does it mean? Is the theory referred to one that accounts for the practice or one that articulates an ideal to which that practice should conform? If it accounts for the practice, then the theory is not a mask but a revelation of the realities. If it articulates an ideal, then the theory stands not as a description of what is but as a prescriptive norm, and hence as a criterion of judgment by which those realities are to be judged. If it is replied that theory here means what people say, then we are simply confronted by the usual dichotomy between rhetoric and performance, between espoused or intended conduct and actual behavior. But a theory is never this; it is always an attempt to describe the true reality—our function, Klee somewhere said, is "not to reveal the visible but to make visible the real"—or to prescribe the proper conduct. Then, if we omit the word "theory" and look only at the word "practice," all that the statement seems to mean is that people do not behave very nicely, which is hardly a piercing insight.

In what sense, then, can the theory or practice of tolerance be termed hypocritical? Presumably in the sense that the theory is at odds with, and a rationalization of, the practice. But this means only that the theory (as explanation rather than as prescription) is deficient, that in fact it is not a theory at all but an ideology.

What, finally, is meant by the phrase "prevailing theory"? Is it Mill's theory of liberty, or what the writers call the doctrine of "pure tolerance"? If so, there is obviously a considerable gap not only between Mill's teaching and current (e.g., American) practice, but also, I think, between that teaching and whatever may be said to be the dominant legal and political view (or views) of liberty. Is it some other theory, a doctrine more in keeping with what our three writers are pleased to call the realities of an industrial democracy? If so, this is not identified. What they attack, then, is not *the* prevailing doctrine of liberty, and not always, as will become clear, Mill's doctrine, but doctrines and conditions imputed to Mill and which, in their view, constitute the hallmark of a sorry liberalism.

* Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore, Jr., and Herbert Marcuse, A Critique of Pure Tolerance (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965).

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Let us consider the contentions of our three critics.

II

Take, first, the argument of Robert Paul Wolff. I am not altogether sure whether he misunderstands Mill or intends his readers to misunderstand Mill, but to the extent that I may read him correctly he depicts Mill at one point as an exponent of psychological egoism and at another as an advocate of individual liberty free of all social restraints. Neither of these characterizations accurately describes Mill. He also asserts that Mill defended the freedoms of thought and of action so long as these did not harm others. But Mill clearly and explicitly distinguished his defense of freedom of thought, which he made an absolute, from freedom of action, which was conditioned by its consequences. Wolff makes the important point that tolerance should not be confused with neutrality or condescension but should be recognized as a positive good; however, though Wolff does not mention it, this is also central to Mill's thought.

What is of interest, then, is not Wolff's critique of Mill—which is, strictly speaking, essentially irrelevant—but the fact that his essay, though it is entitled "Beyond Tolerance," deals less with tolerance than with the conditions that make it ineffective. Wolff believes that tolerance is a doctrine that has emerged from and is only appropriate to a particular stage of historical development, namely, the stage of democratic pluralism. But—and this is what he is most concerned to show—democratic pluralism is no longer adequate to the so-called stage of modernity in which we now find ourselves, and for two reasons primarily: it discriminates against certain disadvantaged social groups or interests—those that are outside the Establishment, that lack "legitimate representation," and that are not consequently given a place or a voice in society—and it discriminates against certain social policies, most directly those that look to the promotion of the common good rather than to the satisfaction of diverse particular interests or claims. As a result, democratic pluralism in its concrete application—though not, Wolff adds, in its theory—supports inequality, maintains the *status quo,* blocks social change. What is required, Wolff concludes, is a new philosophy of community, of the common good, one that goes "beyond pluralism and beyond tolerance."

Now it is curious that one who, like Wolff, relates ideas in near-deterministic fashion to particular stages of historical development—and I must bypass here the familiar and age-old controversy over this asserted but still unproved thesis—should ignore the fact that earlier theories of tolerance, those of Locke and Milton, for example, and perhaps even of Socrates in the *Apology* before them, were not merely arguments for a *qualified* tolerance, but were in a very real sense also arguments consistent with a kind of homogeneous, or largely homogeneous, society. To go beyond pluralism is presumably to plead for a new type of homogeneity, and hence for a new kind of orthodoxy; for from what individuals or groups, and for what purpose, will new and diverse ideas then emerge?

What makes Mill distinctive, and vitally important, is that while he recognized and even pleaded for a sense of national cohesion and for the pursuit of the public interest, he insisted along with this that it was nesessary to respect and to build upon a certain heterogeneity, that progress required *both* the promotion of the common good and the furtherance of individual and group differences. Consequently, in line with his utilitarian philosophy, he argued for the absolute toleration of ideas and for the maximum toleration of variety in practices. He sought a unity that would contain rather than eliminate diversity. In these terms, to argue against pluralism and for the idea of a common good, as if these were opposing and mutually exclusive principles, is to argue for a self-defeating proposition; for it may well be—and I am convinced it is—that democratic pluralism,

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properly understood and properly institutionalized, is precisely what defines or constitutes the core of the common good.

It is noteworthy that Wolff nowhere defines or articulates the nature of his common good; nor does he set out a program for its realization. Were he to attempt to do so, he might find, as many another writer has found, that in a multi-group society the common good requires not the rejection of pluralism but the determination of the appropriate kinds and degrees of pluralism compatible with a political goal. Otherwise there can emerge only a deadening, even if new, conformity. However this may be, if it is true, as Wolff admits, that the fault is not in the theory of pluralism, or of tolerance, but in the shortcomings of its practice, why does he attack the theory of pure tolerance? Why does he not focus instead on the conditions—whether of structure, institutions, attitudes, or all of these combined—that hinder its attainment and impair or delimit its free exercise, and on measures calculated to redress those deficiencies? For it is not Mill and his theory of liberty but the arrangements and practices of modern industrial society that are clearly the issues at stake.

III

Barrington Moore's essay, "Tolerance and the Scientific Outlook," is a more sophisticated and relevant effort. In part, this is because Moore is aware of many of the foregoing considerations and avoids certain elementary confusions. In part, it is because Moore restates and builds upon a number of Mill's arguments—though he does not, curiously, acknowledge this indebtedness. In part, finally, it is because Moore advances an interesting argument of his own.

With respect to Mill, the most important of Moore's restatements is the proposition that the intellectual's task is not to agitate or fight for a particular doctrine or ideal "but to find and speak the truth, whatever the political consequences may be." The latter part of this proposition is, of course, standard Millian doctrine, as may be evidenced by Mill's familiar plea (in his essay "On Civilization") that the very cornerstone and object of education "is to call forth the greatest possible quantity of intellectual *power,* and to inspire the intense *love of truth;* and this without a particle of regard to the results to which the exercise of that power may lead. . . ." But the first part of Moore's statement does not, alas, confront the obvious question: What if one's discovery of the truth is at the same time the discovery of a correct doctrine or ideal? Does his commitment to the truth not require him then to advocate, even agitate for, that doctrine? Does the intellectual not then become a partisan *malgré lui?* If I am to infer Moore's answer from the content of this essay, it is clearly positive. But Moore does not explicitly say so; nor does he pursue the implications of that conclusion. Mill, of course, essayed both roles, precisely because he saw no necessary incompatibility between them.

Moore properly maintains that historical disputes can often be settled by an appeal to the evidence. But does it follow that "tolerance for different 'interpretations' based on different *Weltanschauungen* merely befuddles the issue"? Or that "a scientific attitude toward human society [does not] necessarily induce a conservative tolerance of the existing order"? Clearly, what constitutes relevant evidence is itself a matter of interpretation; and the issue is not whether tolerance or a scientific attitude implies acceptance (or, for that matter, rejection) of a particular interpretation or social order—it does not—but whether it implies acceptance of one's right to entertain and advance *ideas* that defend (or reject) a particular interpretation or social order. When Moore says, as he does, that tolerance of conflicting interpretations befuddles the issue, does he mean to suggest that the natural consequences of a serious examination of alternative doctrines will always, or mostly, lead to the adoption of the wrong doctrine? This, I think, can only be affirmed by re-

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pudiating the value of reason itself, which Moore does not and of course will not do. But if reason itself is not at fault, the rational examination of alternatives cannot lead to befuddlement. What makes for confusion, instead, is the intrusion of unreason, of prejudices or interests or the operation of weighted conditions that militate against the free play of intellect. But then Moore's indictment should turn not on the principle of tolerance but (as with Wolff) on the social conditions in which tolerance is practiced—conditions that deny reason its day in court or that perpetuate the deficiencies of reasoners. All of which would seem to be confirmed by Moore himself when he says that "every idea, including the most dangerous and apparently absurd ones, deserves to have its credentials examined."

This, however, is not the message that Moore is most anxious to communicate. He is concerned rather to argue three things: (a) that the secular and rational (i.e., scientific) outlook, by which he means neither "technicist science" nor "academic humanism" but a conception of science that embraces "whatever is established by sound reasoning and evidence," is adequate both for understanding and evaluating human affairs; (b) that this outlook is able, in principle, to yield clear-cut answers to important questions, including the question of "when to be tolerant and when tolerance becomes intellectual cowardice and evasion"; and (c) finally, and most importantly, that in the present historical moment it may well behoove us to abandon the "nauseating hypocrisy" of "liberal rhetoric," to refuse to work under the prevailing system, and to consider "the conditions under which the resort to violence is justified in the name of freedom."

This is a hard teaching, but not for that reason to be avoided. We must first ask, however, whether it is also true. And here, it seems to me, the answer is by no means as simple as Moore takes it to be.

Consider Moore's claim—(a) and (b)—that objective knowledge and objective evaluation of human institutions are possible, thereby yielding correct and unambiguous answers, independent of individual whims and preferences. If Moore really admires Morris R. Cohen, whom he cites approvingly, he should have borne in mind Cohen's important distinction between the meaning of what is asserted in verified scientific theory and the degree of certainty of its verification. This certainty is always a matter of degree; it is never absolute; for what is verified is the theorems, not the postulates, of the theory. This is why Cohen, like Mill, believed that scientific *method* encourages toleration even as it enables us to differentiate beliefs and opinions which have been confirmed from those which have not.

Now Moore avows his commitment to scientific method. He recognizes that as a method it is a procedure for the testing of ideas, from which it follows that no conclusion, including the contents and very conception of science itself, is permanently above and beyond criticism and, possibly, fundamental change. How, then, can he confuse the principle of tolerance, which at one point he explicitly equates with this scientific procedure, with the acceptance of a particular doctrine or system of order, or assert the possibility not merely of objective knowledge but of objective evaluation, of correct answers to human problems? This is not to deny the relevance and utility of scientific method in the evaluation and solution of such problems; it is only to suggest that the most scientific evaluation, along with its alleged clear-cut answers, is still but tentative rather than absolute, relative to our assumptions and values, and always subject to revision.

Moore, however, confident of his "truths," seems prepared to reject the prevailing system and to adopt a revolutionary attitude. So long as three conditions are met—that the prevailing regime is unnecessarily repressive, that a revolutionary situation is in fact ripening, and that through a rough calculus

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of revolutionary violence one can reasonably believe that the costs in human suffering inherent in the continuation of the *status quo* outweigh those to be incurred in the revolution and its aftermath—the resort to violence, Moore holds, is justified in the name of freedom.

It is not easy for one who views the prevailing regime (or regimes) with considerable unhappiness, and who would consequently welcome certain fundamental changes in the social order, to cavil at Moore's revolutionary posture. Clearly, unless one is prepared to say that under no circumstances may men rebel, that men must remain always at the base of even the most burdensome pyramids of unjust power, there are moments in history when the resort to violence is fully warranted. That many contemporary nations, including the United States, celebrate their own past revolutions is only the more obvious of many instances in point. Thus, as an abstract statement of conditions that require and justify violence to overturn an indecent social order, Moore's argument merits respect. (Though it should not go unnoted that he here goes counter to his own earlier contention that the intellectual is not to be a partisan in the cause of this, or any other, ideal.)

Nevertheless, if we apply his (very far from precise) conditions to the modern industrial societies of the Western world, his argument becomes less than conclusive. For one thing, it is not at all clear that Western industrial societies are so oppressive that violent overthrow of the entire system is justified. For another, it is questionable that the cultural and human drabness to which Moore presumably objects is, in fact, amenable to correction through political action. For still another, the applicability of his second and third conditions is more than problematical. Nor do his conditions take into account certain useful and perhaps necessary distinctions: those, for example, between a class and a national revolution, or between a revolution initiated to seize power and a revolution, like the National Socialist Revolution, imposed after power has been effectively seized. Finally, his argument either neglects or gives insufficient weight to certain risks attendant upon all revolutionary efforts. Of these inconvenient but ever-present risks, I have space here to note only two.

One is the corrupting effects of the revolution itself, which often degrade and alter the characters and principles of the revolutionaries themselves, so that men who emerge at the top after a successful revolution are rarely the same men (even if they retain the same names and carry the same bodies) as those who made the revolution, with all that this implies in the way of altered ends, new hatreds and antagonisms, and new repressions. To be sure, some consequences of a successful revolution may be praiseworthy, e.g., the institution of certain reforms designed to eliminate or abate injustices and discontents. But other consequences are more than likely to be catastrophic. Of these the most immediately probable is the suppression of freedom of speech and political opposition. For it is not uncommon that governments which have survived revolutionary attempts, or which have come to power through revolution, seek with grim determination to eliminate the possibility of further revolutionary efforts. This, certainly, would seem to be one of the more evident lessons of revolutionary movements that have come to power since, say, the Second World War. Thus the appeal to revolution often invites the destruction of the very principle that makes the revolution possible—the principle of tolerance.

The second dangerous risk is the high improbability of success. Paul Kecskemeti has called attention to the striking fact that, despite all the revolutionary talk of the past century, if we except the Iberian peninsula, there have been no serious attempts at internal revolution in peacetime Europe since 1848–49; and if we consider the abortive Hungarian Revolution of 1956 (which took

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place after Kecskemeti wrote), the point is underscored that in the modern industrial state, with its specialized technology and advanced systems of weaponry, and with the support of powerful external armies and governments, civil revolt is in the ordinary course of events most unlikely to succeed. In fact, the normal complement of apathy, contentment, and especially fear—not of sporadic outbreaks but of wholesale violence and disorder—makes it more than unlikely that the masses will venture to disrupt the prevailing system of order by revolutionary means. It is, then, one thing to call for a revolutionary attitude, quite another to call for and expect revolutionary action. (I speak, let it be emphasized again, not of primitive or developing societies, but only of modern industrial societies; for it is only to such states that our authors apply their arguments.)

Once again, therefore, we are back to the central confusion inherent in this criticism: that which equates the principle of tolerance with the restrictive practices of states avowedly committed to that principle. The criticism actually testifies only to the limitations of those practices, and thus leaves untouched—at least at this level of argument—Mill's plea for freedom of thought and expression.

IV

We come now to the most extreme and convoluted, yet in some ways the most intriguing, of our three indictments of pure tolerance: Herbert Marcuse's essay "Repressive Tolerance." It may seem outrageous to suggest that this very title is a contradiction in terms, as are also other phrases employed by Marcuse, for example "totalitarian democracy" and "the democratic educational dictatorship of free men"; but I shall make this suggestion nonetheless. I am aware that Marcuse, as a neo-Hegelian (also a neo-Marxist and neo-Freudian), prides himself on his dialectical thinking. But the dialectic—or, as Marcuse likes to say, the negation of the negation—aims to produce not a conjunction of two opposites but a synthesis which is different from either of them. And expressions like "repressive tolerance," "totalitarian democracy," and "democratic dictatorship," because they mismate rather than synthesize opposites, are self-contradictory and therefore meaningless. They should be banished from the literature. It is necessary to say this at the outset because Marcuse has dwelt harshly and at length on the inadequacies, even the Orwellian evils, of ordinary language, yet has also condemned philosophers who employ linguistic analysis in an effort to avoid the pitfalls of meaninglessness. Why, then, does he himself foster rather than transcend obscurity?

I will have occasion to return to this problem. Let me first, however, try to state the essentials of Marcuse's argument. Briefly, for it is a reiteration and extension of his argument in *One-Dimensional* Man, it comes to this: We—and by "we" Marcuse means the peoples of *all* modern industrial societies, whether "democratic" or otherwise—live today in a totalitarian system. It is totalitarian because, with the concentration of economic and political power and the use of technology as an instrument of domination, and under the rule of monopolistic media, "a mentality is created for which right and wrong, true and false are predefined wherever they affect the vital interests of the society." Rational persuasion is thus all but precluded. In such a situation tolerance "is administered to manipulated and indoctrinated individuals who parrot, as their own, the opinion of their masters." It is a tolerance abstractly "pure" but concretely "partisan," for "it actually protects the already established machinery of discrimination." It is thus repressive rather than true tolerance. For tolerance to be real, it must discriminate instead against falsehood and evil; it must cancel the liberal creed of free and equal discussion; it must preclude harmful ideas and harmful behavior. It must in fact encourage subversion of the existing order,

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even if this requires "apparently undemocratic means."

Marcuse articulates these "apparently undemocratic means" as follows:

> They would include the withdrawal of toleration of speech and assembly from groups and movements which promote aggressive policies, armament, chauvinism, discrimination on the grounds of race and religion, or which oppose the extension of public services, social security, medical care, etc. Moreover, the restoration of freedom of thought may necessitate new and rigid restrictions on teachings and practices in the educational institutions which, by their very methods and concepts, serve to enclose the mind within the established universe of discourse and behavior—thereby precluding a priori a rational evaluation of the alternatives.

All this, Marcuse admits, is censorship, "even precensorship," but warranted because the distinction between liberating and repressive teachings and practices "is not a matter of value-preference but of rational criteria"; and these, Marcuse insists, are empirical in nature, turning on the real possibilities of attaining human freedom in a particular stage of civilization. To the question: Who is to draw these distinctions and make these decisions?—the answer (and here Marcuse mistakenly believes he is following Mill) is: Everyone in the maturity of his faculties as a human being, that is, "everyone who has learned to think rationally and autonomously." To be sure, such men will constitute a minority, but since all systems—even "democratic democracies"—are in fact controlled by a few, the only questions are whether they are the correct few and whether they act in the interests of the many, in short, whether they are qualified to exercise Marcuse's "democratic educational dictatorship of free men." Such free men are not to be identified with any social class; they are rather "fighting minorities and isolated groups . . . hopelessly dispersed throughout the society." To liberate these few, and through them the society as a whole, it is necessary "officially" to practice intolerance—both in speech and in action—against movements from the Right and to be tolerant only of movements from the Left. Through such "repressive tolerance" alone, Marcuse concludes, we can hope to realize the objective of "true tolerance."

Of the many things that might be said by way of analysis of or in reply to this argument, I shall limit myself here to three points: (1) Marcuse confuses the meaning of freedom with its conditions and consequences and hence misunderstands tolerance. (2) Marcuse's argument is essentially, though in reverse, the argument of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor, of the Right. (3) Marcuse's solution is contradicted and rendered impossible of attainment by his own analysis.

(1) Freedom is not, as Marcuse variously affirms it to be, "self-determination, autonomy" or "a specific historical process." It is rather, as Hobbes properly said, the absence of chains. Since in the real world men who are unrestrained come into collision with one another, societies have always and everywhere confronted—and each in its own way resolved—the problem of determining which liberties are worth protecting, for whom, under what conditions, and to what degree, and, as a necessary consequence, which restraints must be imposed. Freedom then becomes an ordered system of liberties and restraints. Men may differ as to the right order of priorities with respect to such liberties, but some order of priorities there must be. Thus, in democratic states a high value is given to freedom of political opposition; in dictatorships it is not. But to assure and protect this freedom, restraints must be imposed on those men (and practices) who would interfere with it. This is one, though not the only, function of law; but it is not, of course, merely a matter of law, for it involves a complex set of attitudes and appropriate behavior in other realms of social life as well.

Now Marcuse may deplore the particular freedoms granted in a specific society. He

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may properly object that a formal or legal freedom is in fact negated by informal or social pressures. But freedom as a principle is always a matter of specific liberties and concomitant restraints. It is not self-determination, though a measure of self-determination may be achieved through a particular combination of liberties and restraints. Nor is it a specific historical process, though the specific combination of liberties and restraints may be conditioned by and reflect the values of a particular historical period. Nor, again, is freedom limited to rational and autonomous men. While Mill clearly preferred a society made up of such men, he was realistic enough to recognize that this could not be a necessary condition of freedom. Thus, while he would not apply his principle of liberty to children and immature peoples, i.e., those not capable of improvement by free and equal discussion, he would and did apply it to all mature (not necessarily "autonomous") men, and not simply to Marcuse's elites. Nor, finally, is freedom vindicated only by "good" results, or rightfully "confined by truth." Freedom is in part a value in itself, in part an instrument of individual development, in part a necessary means of social change. That men and societies might make the "wrong" or "false" choices is clearly possible, but this too is an essential aspect of freedom. Otherwise a select group of allegedly wise men will make these choices for them, and this, by whatever name it may be called, is not freedom.

From all of which it follows that tolerance is not the freedom to express only the right ideas, but the freedom to express even stupid or loathsome ideas. The results may improve or depress the lot of men or societies, but the results are distinct from the principle of tolerance itself. And those who argue for tolerance, even absolute tolerance of ideas, do so because they believe that reason and experience are not calculated to lead men to the wrong decisions. Marcuse's rejection of pure tolerance is in these terms either a distrust of reason itself or a belief that the conditions under which reason operates today are such as to vitiate the process of reason, and probably both. But to the extent that it is the second, his attack is properly directed to those conditions and not to the principle of tolerance. Clearly, the "tolerance" he espouses is intolerance, and so it should be called, lest we abandon all semblance of meaning in our ordinary use of terms.

(2) Those who believe not merely that there is an objective truth but that, by some mystery of incarnation, it has been given to them to know it, have rarely been willing to respect the claim to such knowledge by others. For such True Believers, allowing others to disseminate what is believed to be true, but what in fact is false, is to make possible the adoption of error. For error, seductively presented, may prevail over truth even in free and equal discussion. How much more likely is it to prevail when the conditions are not free and equal, when those who propound the error (because it gratifies their passions or promotes their conceived interests) also control the sources of information and media of communication, and where the objects of the debate are neither rational nor autonomous but "conditioned" men! In such circumstances to trust to an abstract but spurious toleration is to yield the cause. For truth to prevail, the "right" men must impose it—either by altering the conditions or directing otherwise irrational men, and generally both. In this way men will be governed by truth, and thus, even though forced, they will also be free.

This, it is clear, is the argument of Socrates in the *Republic*. It is the argument of Rousseau in the *Social Contract*. It is the argument of the Grand Inquisitor, both of the Roman Catholic Church and of Stalin's Russia. It is the traditional argument of the Right, of all who would usurp the gates of heaven and in the name of a higher morality insist, as with Gerhart Niemeyer, upon "a firm official stand for what is known as right, true, and good." And it is, in all essentials,

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the argument of Marcuse. But it is not the argument of John Stuart Mill.

For Mill, as for all democrats committed to the liberal idea of freedom, to believe in Man is not to dispel one's doubts about men. Men are fallible and cannot presume to know the whole truth. Room must therefore be left for the rectification of error and the discovery of additional knowledge. This requires tolerance, the free exploration and articulation of ideas. It may well be that there are deficiencies in the intellectual marketplace, but the remedy is not to mistake Marcuse's authority for truth; it is rather to correct those deficiencies. To substitute one allegedly right authority for another, to compel or manipulate men to do what Marcuse (or anyone else) is convinced it is proper for them to do is not to force them to be free. It is simply to subject them to Marcuse's (or another's) will. This, by any name, is coercion. It ill accords with the purposes of one who professes to respect humanity.

(3) Finally, and briefly, Marcuse's argument collapses because the reality he portrays renders unattainable, and is in turn contradicted by, the proposals he recommends. If it is true that we live "in a democracy with totalitarian organization" and that this "coordinated society" rests on "firm foundations," how is it humanly possible to change it? Surely not by election, for the "conditioned" masses will simply acquiesce in the opinions of their masters. Surely not by education, for the rulers control both the educators and their media of communication. Surely not by revolution, for who will revolt but "hopelessly dispersed" minorities? It may well be, as Marcuse thinks, that in such a situation the alienated man is the "essential" rather than the sick man, and that rebellious men merit applause rather than condemnation. But such men, however viewed, cannot overturn a firmly established order. Then to whom, and for what purpose, does Marcuse speak? Is his message really more than a tocsin of futility, a summons to surrender?

If, on the other hand, we are to take seriously his plea for fundamental social and political change, for the establishment of "real" tolerance (or, as he says, "official" intolerance), it can only mean that the society is less than totalitarian, that its foundations are not altogether firm, that there are chinks in the monopolistic concentration of power.

Marcuse cannot have it both ways: either his analysis is correct and his recommendations are unrealizable, or his recommendations are meaningful and appropriate, in which case his analysis cannot stand.

V

It would be less than just to conclude these remarks without noting the deep anguish and high moral commitment that animate all three of our critics. They are disturbed, and properly so, by the injustices that disfigure modern societies. They are distressed by the realization that these injustices are maintained by an indifferent, because unseeing, or acquiescent public opinion. Consequently they probe to the roots in an effort to uncover the sources and the interests that mold that opinion. And they have found, as every sensitive observer of human societies has always found, that within our cities there are still two cities—the city of the rich and the city of the poor, with all that this implies in inequalities of power, of access to privileges, and of opportunities. One need not accept everything that A. J. Liebling has written in *The Press,* or that C. Wright Mills has written in *The Power Elite,* to recognize that freedom of speech, for example, has a different meaning for those wealthy enough to buy a newspaper or to purchase time on radio or television, than it has for the masses of individuals who may wish to express their thoughts but have no effective access to the various media of communication. Nor does it require undue imagination to note that men cannot choose what they do not know exists, or will not choose what they have been taught to believe is evil. For these and

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other reasons, it is less than convincing to argue that the principle of equality accurately characterizes the world of public opinion, or that the free play of ideas does in fact afford people a full range of alternatives.

In underscoring these objectionable features of contemporary life and in urging their correction, our three critics manifest a concern for Man rather than for rich or powerful or prestigious men. Further, in their readiness to foster even revolutionary social and political change in an effort to elevate Man from what he presently is to what he ought to be, to what he *can* be, they identify themselves with an abiding radical tradition. They are legitimately of the Left.

But a wise radicalism seeks to overturn not all things, only unjust and harmful things; and not everything that men have thought and done in the course of human history demands repudiation. There have been achievements, too, and of these not the least noble has been the slow and painful liberation of the human mind. Whatever the merits or demerits of liberalism as a political and economic doctrine, in the realm of the intellect it should command our supreme allegiance: for it has freed reason from the chains of dogma and superstition; it has broken the back of orthodoxy; it has given us a method by which we may continue to correct our errors and improve our understanding. And whatever the merits or demerits of a particular social system in observing, or failing to observe, the principle of liberalism in the intellectual sphere, it is necessary—and I believe that even under circumstances that most humanly approximate the ideal, it will remain necessary—always to distinguish the fact of public opinion, what may be called the will of the people, from the motives and influences that elicit it. Democracies rest on the volume, not on the quality, of that will; and though no one would contend that it is better to have a stupid or misguided will, what distinguishes democratic from nondemocratic governments is that the former rest upon that will even though oligarchic or plutocratic influences may have been powerful in creating it, while the latter reject that will, or at most seek to mold it in support of their policies; it is not, as in democratic states, an initiating and controlling will. To render that will a purer or wiser will is surely a proper concern of democratic (whether liberal or radical) theorists, but this means that they must look not to the removal of that will, or of the process that alone gives it the opportunity to be formed after a consideration of alternatives, but to the correction of those conditions that limit or block the introduction of new and conflicting ideas. In any case, the fact of will and not its purity or disinterestedness remains the foundation of the democratic state.

Those who, therefore, in the name of a social revolution, would destroy not merely the conditions that still constrain reason but the principle of tolerance that alone gives reason its chance to prevail, defy the grim lessons of history. What, then, can one say of those who, like Marcuse, seek to reverse history by substituting for even the imperfect democracies of our day an intellectual and political authoritarianism that would allegedly act *for* the people, on the ground that a government that really acts in the interests of the people is better (and more democratic) than a government *by* the people that may, through ignorance or irrationality, act contrary to those best interests? Such men are neither radical nor liberal but, let us use the cruel word, reactionary. This is why, despite all the legitimate criticisms that might be (and in the course of the past century have been) made of Mill's philosophy, or of his political and economic teachings, or even of the subsidiary doctrines and incidental observations in his essay *On Liberty,* the central argument of that essay remains fundamentally unimpaired.

Not Mill's theory of pure tolerance but the repressive intolerance of our critics is, then, to be condemned.

□

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Jeremy Larner

Initiation for Whitey: Notes on Poverty and Riot

As I write the slum areas of several dozen large American cities have been ravaged by Negro rioters and by the cops and guardsmen who put them down. For urban Negroes, the pull-back of the poverty program may have been that final straw which broke down their habitual patience and resignation. The ballyhooed War on Poverty was sabotaged, according to the burgeoning number of Left ideologists, by an essentially racist country conducting an imperialist war in Asia and bent on holding down exploited dark-skinned masses everywhere. Whether or not such generalizations are justified, the hysteria which prompts them finds ready symbols in the bombing escalation of Hanoi and toward the Chinese border, in the photos of "Vietnam-type" tanks rumbling through the streets of Newark, in news broadcasts announcing that Viet Cong are flushed out of tunnels with "antiriot" gas.

There are others on the Left, myself included, who still see America as less than monolithic, who insist that there are forces available in this country to change both foreign and domestic policy. For us, American resources have been tragically misspent, aims deflected and purposes misguided. We still insist that there is a fight worth fighting on the battleground of American politics—in the interests of not only the Negroes but all the people.

For the time being, however, the argument has been vacated by a cycle of paranoia, wherein the lies, chauvinism, sweeping historical analogies, self-righteousness, and violence of American policy-makers are reflected in perfect miniature by the demagogues of American racism, off their rockers black and white alike and ready to give no quarter until their pain and rage are satisfied. Political emotion bounces from far Right to far Left, with no room anywhere for the constructive analysis so desperately needed if American democracy is to survive in any viable condition.

Stokely Carmichael has been to Cuba, singing loon-songs of world-wide guerrilla warfare. But Richard Hughes, the liberal governor of New Jersey, is warning that we must draw a line to separate us from "the jungle"; and the disgraceful Ninetieth Congress passes legislation which only punishes the cities and prolongs the horror in Vietnam.

Yet when the poverty program began it drew thousands of previously disenfranchised poor people who saw in its pitifully inadequate funding an opportunity to create institutions of social equity, and who insisted they were all the more American to do so. Everywhere poverty funds were available, new elements who had never been active in politics came forth to struggle with tradi-

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tional power groups and in many cases to make space for themselves in the political structures of their communities. Anyone but the most rigid determinist would have to acknowledge positive possibilities in the ferment created by the beginnings—and the idea—of a war on poverty.

Still, the ghettos remained, Vietnam drew off funds, and local party hacks acted swiftly to eviscerate programs. The gains of the poverty program, like the gains of the civil rights movement, have led mainly to bitterness and a sense of promises betrayed. In an atmosphere of frustration, anger and expanded freedom, desperate alternatives are quickly put forward. One is the idea of "Black Power"—which at its best involves developing the ghettos (now partially gutted) as economic and political "power bases," at its worst reinforces the existing stalemate of separation and racial mistrust and drives away the liberal forces who are needed to speed the dissolution of that stalemate. Frequently connected with the Black Power slogan is the idea of revolutionary violence—for some a religion, others a therapy—which seems in this moment of rioting and backlash an inevitable but hopeless development.

All of which presents problems, to put it mildly. Even before the rioting, the poverty program had raised serious issues in relation to the welfare state and the problem of democratic participation. Now, as violence raises the ante and there is no sign of slackening pressure abroad, there has emerged among radicals and liberals an apocalyptic yet personally exculpating world view in which the United States stands revealed as having been all along the representative of total reaction —history's antithesis, as it were, which in the throes of self-annihilation will liberate humanity.

If this is gospel truth, then speculation is mere distraction. But once one does indulge in thought, monistic historical and political assumptions won't go very far toward describing or explaining the rather complex set of circumstances which surround American poverty and our various attempts to cope with it. Let me propose the virtues of a double-minded attitude—for purposes of action as well as analysis.

II

Most radical and liberal commentators are quick to condemn what they correctly describe as America's "two-faced" attitude toward poverty. On one hand America recognizes that certain elements among the poor cannot be absorbed into the world of steady, responsible work. It therefore gives them the dole—but under extremely degrading circumstances. On the other hand America perpetuates the myth that it is an open society in which all can find honorable work. For those who have fallen by the wayside, it provides "social services."

The activist critics of the poverty program often try to resolve this situation by urging that poor people are just as capable and self-sufficient as anyone, and that all they need to set them on a level of social and economic equality is a regular dole—as a matter of right, not charity. They also insist that the poor themselves should be the main administrators of poverty funds—an idea which influenced the OEO's original concept of Community Action Projects. (For certain foundation-financed theorists, "community support" is a negative term, because it involves "condescending liberals." "Elected officials" are anathema to certain middle-class poverty leaders, because they inevitably "serve the interests of the middle class.")

There is much truth in these strictures. Anyone in contact with the inhabitants of urban slums cannot fail to be impressed with a kind of realistic wisdom which, while not propelling its possessors up the ladder of American success, manages to provide sustenance, pleasure, and in some cases a version of affluence. Slum-dwellers may not run their affairs in accordance with the standard models, but they are capable of running their own affairs. And the investigatory, punitive system of welfare only hampers them. To

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cite only the most glaringly destructive feature, it may force a husband to leave or pretend to leave his family so that his wife may collect Aid to Dependent Children.

Yet for all its saving graces, its toughness, flexibility and hard-boiled humor, the culture of poverty is self-defeating and self-perpetuating. One thing the poverty program has proved is that simply turning over funds and programs to the poor does not in itself enable them to transform the circumstances that keep them poor.

Among these circumstances is the deep-grained philosophy of the hustle, which sees society and personal relations as a series of power games. Granted, there is truth enough to such a view—especially when one is looking up from the bottom. But hustling as an outlook or as a mode of activity finally cannot comprehend the various problems which have to do with learning, training, saving, postponing—and other attitudes necessary to achieve full economic participation in an increasingly technological society, whether one is "middle-class" or not. In some cities —though no one likes to admit it—the hustling view of life has caused Negro youngsters to turn down decent jobs in favor of a more free-wheeling style of livelihood. The philosophy of hustling must be undermined and destroyed by any poverty program worthy of being taken seriously. Hustling will be given up only when it is the least useful defense—which is to say, only when jobs with futures are provided, jobs which involve a meaningful connection with the larger society. Furthermore, job-holders must be trained to see and use that connection, probably while they are on the job. There are some respects in which it is not enough merely to pay the poor.

HARYOU in New York is one of the many Community Action Projects which suffered from a too-loose distribution of funds, resulting not only in shortages but in cases where a few hustlers were accused of taking up to 100 percent kickbacks from the kids they hired. Perhaps the most uncomfortable aspect of HARYOU was its hiring of black nationalist youths in sinecures designed to keep them from touching off riots. For at least one summer this end was achieved. But what do you teach a kid when you pay him a government salary to threaten the government or to spread mindless propaganda? Precisely that life is a hustle—that might not only makes right but is identical with it. Since he has the pay-off already, why should he bother with any form of education or self discipline? And finally, how could political or social ideals be anything more to such a youth than expressions of class or race or personal drives for power? [1]

Yes, we have failed to make our American representative system truly representative—we have left a segment of our population powerless and impoverished. Yet poverty programs turned over entirely to "local" groups were often at least as corrupt as programs run through the standard political bureaucracies. And often they were even less representative of the people in the neighborhoods. Nepotism flourished, minority factions usurped whole organizations, and an inordinate amount of money was siphoned into plans, studies, staff and equipment.

Where do we go from here? Somehow programs have to involve linkages with the mainstream of society—for the benefit of all concerned. It is not enough to turn the slums over to the slum-dwellers: that is too much like what they already have, whether you call it "participation" or penury. Real participation would involve openings beyond the ghetto into areas of massive economic opportunity and retraining. The culture of the ghetto must be absorbed and utilized—which is not the same as being destroyed. The ghetto itself must be destroyed.

Some radicals unwittingly contradict them-

[1] Andrew Kopkind echoes this attitude in *The New York Review of Books* (August 24, 1967), where he states that "Morality, like politics, starts at the barrel of a gun." Presumably he learned this from "the underground press, the speeches of Malcolm, the works of Fanon, the songs of the Rolling Stones and Aretha Franklin," which he cites as "the important literature now."

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selves in calling for welfare reform. Basically they insist on the dole in recognition of the fact that the poor are not fully employable. Fair enough. But at the same time they maintain that poverty funds must be turned over exclusively to the poor. What makes them think that people who are not fully employable are fully capable of administering poverty funds? Even in cases where they are, the most successful local programs plus a steady dole would not by themselves break up American poverty; they would at best be no more than the mainstays of an isolated community in an inferior economic position. More important than either the dole or subsidized autonomous projects is the need for a full-scale national economic program, without which local projects are doomed to dry up from lack of umbilical connections.

If the issue is reduced to whether there should be a guaranteed income or not, of course there should be. But work is even better. To speak realistically, people on dole will not have "dignity," no matter what. We can and should eliminate the abuses, the condescension, the costly and degrading checkups. But surviving on a welfare check or an income subsidy is not the same as having a future. And for most people, it's not necessary—not when there is so much work to do in this country. People who are now battling the welfare inspectors increment by increment could be staffing hospitals, rebuilding cities, providing services, perhaps creating whole new communities.

If such an overall effort were under way, it would be matched by individual efforts to participate in it. The worker looking above him would see opportunity and not merely a closed corporation. He would have an incentive to become skillful. I am mindful that the American ideal of making one's self has been for some a vicious myth. But channels for doing just that have always been open, and remain some of our most valuable social possessions. We need more channels, more representation, a larger, fairer dole—and nationally planned work programs involving both middle-class and poor people engaged together in meaningful reconstruction of their own country.

We cannot hope for a magic resolution of our double attitude toward poverty, since poor people are in fact burdens as well as honorable victims. Perhaps the most productive stance would be an open acknowledgment of ambiguity—so that we may simultaneously proceed with an improved welfare system *and* an economic program which could free every individual capable of being freed. These efforts are not mutually exclusive.

III

One problem for the boy growing up in the ghetto is that models are lacking to show how one might successfully enter the world of trade and technology in which most American males are employed. The young Negro who is successful in "straight" employment is apt to move away—and become identified with the larger world, which is seen from the ghetto as a white world.

The power who remains "on the street" (or parked in his Cadillac) and thus available for identification, is the hustler. I have already mentioned the hustler's credo of might equals right, but there is another aspect of his makeup worth underscoring in terms of its educational implications. Which is simply that the hustler knows all the answers. He picks them up—as Malcolm X did—by paying attention all day long to power plays. He is shrewd about the use of force, at least within his own precincts. But when it comes to knowledge, what he mainly wants is a ready-made line, a set of hard-nosed aphorisms—so that he will have a quick answer in any threatening situation. He wants not to be caught short verbally, for he knows a sharp retort is another form of power.[2]

[2] "'John,' I said, 'how many degrees in a circle?'
"He said, 'Three hundred and sixty.'
"I drew a square. 'How many degrees in that?' He said three hundred and sixty.
"I asked him was three hundred and sixty

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The trouble is that street knowledge can't risk unsureness, can't risk leaving questions open. So that if something can't be picked up in a quick formula, it will likely be banished from consciousness. Malcolm, for instance, with his razor wit, had at any point in his life—whether as zoot-suit hipster, Black Muslim, or pan-African nationalist—a complete set of consistent answers which turned complexity into a captivating simplicity. After a speech of Malcolm's, his followers repeated his answers by rote—as they still do in the junior nationalist "five-per-center" groups, where youngsters are given a catechism to memorize, full of anthropological and historical absurdities.[3]

No doubt poor people are not the only ones susceptible to the all-or-nothing concept of learning. But for poor boys such a misconception is fatal, because it means that training and education are seen as initiation —as into a club, or a secret society—rather than as an open process. There are sad stories among poverty workers of Negro youths who approach, say, psychologists, and announce, I've seen what you do, man: why can't I take your place? On being told they must go through a specific training process over a period of years, they throw up their hands.

What happens these days to the large majority of boys who aspire to be "street-wise"—who in fact *must* be, simply to survive —but who can't make it big as hustlers and who lack some lucky talent that would enable them to rise in the world unassisted? Naturally they resent the white establishment, whose official members they see as licensed hustlers—licensed, in some cases, to treat Negroes brutally. These boys don't want training—they *want in right away*. If Whitey won't give them an initiation, then they'll initiate Whitey.

If he goes into the Armed Services, a Negro boy may get his desired initiation. But if he stays on the street, the young Negro is likely to collide with another type—exemplified by Carmichael and LeRoi Jones, among others—the successful middle-class Negro who can't bear the torment of perceiving himself a part of "white" society while masses of his people are left behind. He solves his identity problem much as does the hustler—by adopting a set of absolute answers, in this instance those of the apocalyptic black revolutionary. He offers this identity to drifting youth—an identity of innate bravery and superiority and dedication and solidarity. It is only reasonable that many a young Negro will prefer this conception of himself to that of the disadvantaged student, fighting a lonely struggle to educate himself and keep his bearings in the face of discrimination and poverty. An interaction goes on

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degrees, then, the maximum of degrees in anything?

"He said 'Yes.'

"I said, 'Well, why is it that Masons go only to thirty-three degrees?'

"He had no satisfactory answer. But for me, the answer was that Masonry, actually, is only thirty-three degrees of the religion of Islam, which is the full projection, forever denied to Masons, although they know it exists."

—From the chapter "Satan," in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Like Malcolm, Stokely Carmichael lays great stress on "the power to define." Here is an excerpt from a speech to the students of Morgan State College, as transcribed in *The Movement,* June 1967:

"Now then we come to the question of definitions. We will talk about that for a while. It is very, very important because I believe that people who can define are masters.

"I want to read a quote. It is one of my favorite quotes. It comes from *Alice in Wonderland,* Lewis Carroll. . . .

" ' "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "I mean just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "who is to be master." '

"That is all. That is all. Understand that . . . the first need of a free people is to define their own terms. . . ."

Note that Mr. Carmichael, unlike Mr. Carroll, identifies with Humpty Dumpty.

[3] ". . . if you started with a black man, a white man could be produced; but starting with a white man, you never could produce a black man—because the white chromosome is recessive. And since no one disputes that there was but one Original Man, the conclusion is clear."

—From the chapter "Saved," in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

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between demagogue and potential rioter not unlike the traditional interaction between Negro preacher and potential lamb of Jesus.

A white man may argue that Negro violence is not politically efficient; he may deride the intellectual inadequacy of the new black ideology; but he cannot legitimately tell a young Negro that his allegiance to the catchwords of Black Power does not make him feel better on the inside.

What of the white civil rights and poverty workers—the idealistic students, the increasingly radical social workers, the impassioned ministers—who in past years have gone into the ghettos to unite themselves with America's most urgent cause? I am afraid that many of them—at least the ones who project onto the Negro their longing for a noble savage—must share with Congress and other officials, and with society at large, a responsibility for the riots. For in many cases, *seen in terms of a might-makes-right perspective,* the poverty workers have been fawning—allowing themselves to be conned and worse (sometimes much worse). And this too confirms the desperate identity of superiority. The young militant has no respect for those who come to his neighborhood to tell him how great he is. If I'm so great, he thinks, then I will take what you have.

IV

Interesting that so far the rioters have attacked mainly police (with bottles and bricks and words, seldom bullets) and property. They have fire-bombed white stores, loan offices and adjacent housing. In retaliation, guardsmen in Newark smashed black-owned stores, and troops and police shot up Negro dwelling-places. Supposedly they were shooting at snipers, but one has to wonder about the existence of snipers who hit so few targets. If there were organized Negro assassins at work, it's hard to believe they could have aimed so badly. Perhaps they had reasons for aiming to miss. At any rate, the vast majority of those killed were Negroes, and in most cases few people were killed until the order was given for official triggers to be pulled. Reporters have confirmed that in both Newark and Detroit, the cops and guardsmen shot at each other and at the sparks of their own bullets striking houses. In some cases, they waited in ambush to shoot up cars which failed to stop at unmanned roadblocks.

It seems clear that regardless of Black Power rhetoric—"burn this town," "shoot honkies," etc.—the main motives of those who joined in were economic. Some inhabitants of the ghetto felt they were entitled to loot white-owned stores, and that the police and troopers were agents of hostile forces. Their action examined apart from rhetoric said very simply and explicitly, "we will not endure these circumstances. You owe us more than you can ever give us."

And we do.

V

The militant—the creator of and the believer in black rhetoric—is deeply dependent on the very world he is scorning and threatening. He's not abandoning America—he can't. He wants to punish America. Far from aloof, he's deeply hurt at having been snubbed and used and moved away from. He wants America to pay attention; when he gets no response, he feels himself nothing. And he is very American in the way he goes about creating his position.

First he has an "image"—a militant image, a black image, a unique image without which one does not have access to the media. The young militant shares and feeds the American appetite for image. Already this gives him a role to play—destructive, threatening, but nonetheless part of the scene. It's better than nodding out on junk. If people are afraid of you, you exist, you know who you are.

If he relies on ideology—well, certainly the Jews, Irish, and Italians protected themselves with cynical philosophies about Amer-

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ican opportunity (and their own superiority) —and certainly they developed their share of hustlers and hoods. I am told that the Irish riots of the 19th century were bloodier than anything we've yet seen from the Negroes. And righteous free-lance violence is hardly an exclusive property of Negroes, as an evening with your TV set will confirm.

As far as looting is concerned, the Negroes are small-time compared to American businessmen—and I don't mean the little shopkeepers either; I mean the swingers on Wall Street and the WASPs who head up our huge corporations. Which costs America more—riots or oil depletions? Riots or drug mark-ups? Riots or market manipulations?

In their roles as true believers, as masculine upholders of honor and right, unafraid to take violent action, even to die, in behalf of their beliefs, the Black Power cultists are more classically Western than the white flower ideologists out to transform human nature with drugs, youth, love, colored lights, pop music and polysexuality.

It's even possible to understand why some historians see the riots and the talk of guerrilla warfare as symptoms of the inevitable disruption that occurs whenever a new class or group forces its way into the mainstream of American society. Some years from now, their argument goes, the racial conflict will have resolved itself, and the usual variety of opinions and loyalties will flourish among a more relaxed Negro population.

Maybe so. But in the meantime it is a terrible thing to see whites and blacks locked into oratorical abstractions which only reinforce hatred and guilt and violence. It seems obvious that the Negroes will be hurt most, even as in every riot they make up a large majority of the dead and wounded. Surely of all the segregated groups that have fought against social stigmata, the Negroes—brought to this country against their will and subject to slavery, lynch law and emasculation—have the toughest fight on their hands. For that reason they are prey to the most self-destructive temptations. But for that reason also they of all people can least afford any kind of self-deception.

It is frightening to see a cycle in operation —a cycle of poverty and rhetoric, violence and backlash. American society has a tremendous job to do in terms of creating genuine economic and educational opportunities; yet apparently this job will get little more than peanuts allocated to it as long as our President is escalating the war in Vietnam. With every escalation a portion of faith is torn away from this country. The black man in the ghetto stabs at his own heart, which is also the heart of our cities, and as the ghettos burn, one hears loud crackings all around, as if the whole crazy country were on fire. □

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Robert L. Heilbroner and Dennis H. Wrong

Development & Democracy

A Debate on Some Problems of the "Third World"

I. Dennis H. Wrong

ROBERT HEILBRONER'S ESSAY, "Counterrevolutionary America," is the most intelligent and forceful statement of a point of view that is widely held by writers on economic development in the Third World.[1] Although Heilbroner is an economist, his conclusions rest only to a minor degree on economic expertise. Both in the article and in his earlier book-length essay, *The Great Ascent*,[2] he fully recognizes that economic development necessarily involves massive social and political changes in addition to the changes in the techniques and the organization of production that the term connotes in its narrow sense. Heilbroner's argument, anticipated in his earlier book but stated far more strongly and without qualification in the more recent article, is that the obstacles posed to rapid economic development by traditional values and old established ruling elites are so great that a revolution bringing to power a Communist-type totalitarian dictatorship can alone be expected to overcome them and proceed with the urgent task of modernizing backward societies.

It is worth reviewing step by step the reasoning by which Heilbroner reaches this conclusion. The essentials of his position are shared by many other writers—indeed, some of them have become virtual commonplaces in discussions of economic development. By summarizing the argument as schematically as possible, shorn of Heilbroner's considerable eloquence and richness of allusion, it should be possible to see its main structure and to separate the truths from the assumptions and hypotheses contained in it.

1. ONLY the starting point of the argument involves an economic proposition: namely, that the task of initial capital accumulation in underdeveloped countries requires the holding down for a time of the living standards of the peasants, who constitute the mass of the population; not until the "infrastructure" of a modern economy has been built will it be possible for the resulting gains in productivity to be widely distributed.

But strictly economic considerations are transcended as soon as we ask what groups and agencies in contemporary underdeveloped countries are capable of organizing and directing the economic task of drawing a portion of the peasantry off the land to build

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[1] Robert L. Heilbroner, "Counterrevolutionary America," *Commentary*, April 1967, pp. 31–38.

[2] Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Great Ascent*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963.

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capital, and of collecting part of the agricultural produce of the remaining peasants to feed this new nonagricultural labor force. The absence of rising commercial and entrepreneurial classes resembling the European *bourgeoisie*, or of any group imbued with an ethos favoring, like the Protestant ethic, hard work and the sacrifice of present material gains for the future, means that the state alone can play the necessary role in today's backward countries. Most experts on economic development concede (in the large view at least) that the state must assume the entrepreneurial function in the majority of the nations of the Third World and that these nations are therefore likely to adopt some form of collectivism or "state socialism." Only a handful of neoclassical economists disagree. The state must be a strong state if it is to initiate successful programs of economic development. That is, it must, in the first instance, possess the power and the will to coerce or buy off traditional elites that resist modernizing measures. But, more important, it must command the allegiance of a significant portion of the population.

2. THERE IS LITTLE in this analysis so far that is likely to arouse much disagreement. The next step in Heilbroner's argument, however, goes beyond the limits of general consensus. In order to win the support of the masses, the argument runs, the state must promote a new ideological creed that will penetrate their minds and hearts, win them away from traditional habits, beliefs, and loyalties—"reach and rally them," as he puts it—and induce them to acquiesce in the sacrifices and rigors of the period of capital accumulation. Such a creed is bound to be intolerant of all dissent and is likely to contain a strong negative component, branding foreigners, in particular the West, as carriers of evil and as actual or potential supporters of oppositionists at home. Clearly, this description is matched most closely by a revolutionary regime that has seized power after mobilizing a sizable segment of the population against the old order or foreign imperialists, or, most probably, a combination of both. Only a militant revolutionary state can make the sharp break with the past and impose the strict totalitarian discipline on a sprawling agrarian society that are needed to begin "the Great Ascent" to the heights of modernization.

Heilbroner's rejection of the belief or hope that democratic constitutional governments, preserving and fostering the political liberties of the individual citizen, are capable of achieving economic development is presented in less detail than his reasons for thinking that some form of totalitarian collectivism can do the job. But his case against democratic government is implicit in much of his argument and has been more fully stated by other writers who share his general outlook. I shall draw on some of them to flesh out his thesis.[3]

Most of the states in the Third World are far from being genuine nations. Democratic institutions and practices, it is held, can only delay the task of nation-building by encouraging all the diverse ethnic, religious, tribal, and linguistic groups that make up the populations of the new states to articulate their distinctive values and interests. The new states must create an overriding sense of national purpose and identity transcending parochial group loyalties if they are to carry out effective economic development programs. A democratic multiparty system will perpetuate and even accentuate the fragmentation of their populations. This argument has been applied most widely in defense of one-party dictatorships in Africa. It makes a specifically *political* case against democracy in the Third World, seeing nation-building as the prime requisite for the strong state that is in turn a prime requisite for economic development.

[3] For a critique resembling in some respects the present one of prevalent assumptions about modernization in the Third World, see Charles C. Moskos, Jr., and Wendell Bell, "Emerging Nations and Ideologies of American Social Scientists," *The American Sociologist*, May 1967, pp. 67–72.

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Unlike Africa, most Asian and Latin-American nations do not confront the immediate necessity of welding together collections of tribal peoples who have often been traditional enemies and have never acknowledged any central political authority. The case against democracy in Asia and Latin America rests less on the alleged requirements of nation-building than on the contention that democratic governments cannot succeed in breaking the resistance to far-reaching social reform offered by old classes and elites—parasitic landlords, village moneylenders, *compradore* merchants, corrupt military and bureaucratic cliques, hoary priestly oligarchies. Democracy is likely to be no more than a facade behind which these groups retain full power, occasionally lulling the masses with token reforms.

A more general argument against democracy in the Third World, one that is more closely linked to the initial prerequisites for economic development, holds that the masses are likely to vote themselves welfare state benefits, opting for immediate improvements in their standard of living rather than for capital investment and thus defeating long-range development programs. Argentina under Peron and particularly the persistence of Peronist sympathies among the industrial workers long after the dictator's fall from power are frequently cited as the standard horrible example.[4] There is an obvious contradiction between the assertion that democracy in the Third World is doomed to be a mere facade manipulated by the traditional ruling classes and the expressed fear that it will result in the mass electorate voting for immediate, "uneconomic" gains in income; but we shall let this pass for the moment.

This, in broad outline, is Heilbroner's thesis, omitting only his observations on the probable attitude of the United States to revolutionary regimes in the Third World, which I shall discuss very briefly later. The thesis, both in Heilbroner's and other versions, has evoked vigorous objections from liberals and democrats unwilling to accept the necessity and inevitability of the totalitarian trend it postulates. Their reactions, however, have usually failed to go beyond ringing reaffirmation of democratic and humanitarian values and expressions of moral outrage at the apparent readiness of so many Western writers to regard violence and repressive government as the unavoidable price of modernization. Heilbroner is entitled to reply to such protests—indeed, he has already so replied (see the correspondence columns of the July *Commentary* [5])—"don't blame me for being the bearer of bad news. To refute me you must first show that the news is not as bad as I've reported, that my analysis is mistaken, and this you have failed to do."

3. THE HEILBRONER THESIS OUTLINES certain social prerequisites for economic development and maintains that democratic institutions are bound to present obstacles to fulfilling them. Since democracy runs the risk of promoting anarchic factionalism, permitting privileged classes to retain covert control over the government, and encouraging all groups to seek to use the state to advance their material interests, the thesis possesses an immediate plausibility. The plausibility carries over to the next step in the argument, where it is asserted that a government lacking democratic features will be able to avoid the problems of democracy and meet the requirements of modernization. But what if we start by asking, What are the difficulties that a totalitarian revolutionary regime is likely to face in carrying out development programs? These difficulties are conceded in passing by Heilbroner, but they fail to receive the attention they deserve because of the initial critical focus on the difficulties apt to be encountered by "mild," democratic governments.

[4] Heilbroner, *The Great Ascent*, p. 100.

[5] *Commentary*, July 1967, pp. 18–20.

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To begin with, the inflammatory nationalism, the xenophobia, and the exaltation of the state—which are, according to Heilbroner, invariable ingredients of the "mobilizing appeal" of revolutionary elites—lead to the investment of considerable resources in armaments and the maintenance of large standing armies. Such expenditures are, of course, an utter waste from the standpoint of economic development. If demonstration steel mills and airlines are to be regarded as economically irrational national status symbols, how much more so are jet planes, tanks, and well-drilled armies? True, the desire for national strength and military glory may indeed motivate a nation to modernize its capital equipment and thus lay the foundation for eventual increases in productivity that will wipe out mass poverty and improve every citizen's material lot. A nation that can send sputniks into outer space is presumably capable of mass-producing shoes and automobiles, although the Soviet Union has yet to confirm this. However, underdeveloped nations are more likely to purchase the sinews of war from the advanced nations by intensifying their production of staple raw materials—the very condition that is part of the whole syndrome of their economic backwardness. Moreover, the trouble with large defense expenditures is that they tend to become self-perpetuating, not merely because they create vested interests, but because they persuade insecure neighbors to arm themselves, thus justifying the claim that a large military establishment is necessary for national security. Surely, those nations that have followed most closely Heilbroner's prescription—Russia, China, Egypt, Sukarno's Indonesia—have diverted enormous human and material resources from peaceful economic development to military uses.

In addition, the enhanced importance of the army makes a military take-over more probable should the revolutionary regime falter. If any "wave of the future" is discernible in the Third World at the present moment, it is in the direction of military dictatorships rather than Communist revolutions. Since 1960 revolutionary national socialist or left-nationalist reformist regimes have been overthrown in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Algeria, Ghana, and Indonesia, and have been discredited—to put it mildly—in Egypt and Syria. It is still altogether possible that in China, Mao's "cultural revolution" will be terminated by an army take-over. Military dictatorships have also replaced shaky democratic civilian governments in Nigeria, the Congo, Greece, and a number of smaller African nations. A few of these new regimes are national socialist and even pro-Communist in ideological orientation (e.g., Algeria); a larger number are right-wing, strongly anti-Communist, or even protofascist (e.g., Argentina, Brazil, Greece, Indonesia).

Finally, aggressive nationalism and militarism may induce nations to seek territorial expansion, causing wars that risk spreading to engulf entire subcontinents, if not the world. Barrington Moore, Jr., observes that military defeat in World War II was part of the price paid by Japan for following a conservative-fascist path to modernization.[6] In other words, the dead of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Tokyo fire-bomb raids, and the Pacific islands campaigns must be cast into the balance against the "preventable deaths" from starvation and injustice under the old regime in toting up the costs of Japanese modernization.[7] Should not the Soviet Union's enormous losses in World War II be assessed, along with the victims of Stalin's purges and enforced collectivizations, as part of the price of totalitarian Communist modernization? Stalin's army purges, his opportunistic foreign policy toward Germany, and his unpopularity with the peasants who first hailed the Nazi invaders as liberators, all stemmed from his totalitarian rule and con-

[6] Barrington Moore, Jr., *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1966), p. 271.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 104; Heilbroner, "Counterrevolutionary America," p. 34.

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tributed to Russian military defeats in the early stages of the war.

Some Western nations also went through a military-expansionist phase in the course of their modernization. But in the present century technology has made even "conventional" warfare far more destructive than in the past. If, as Heilbroner argues, greater population growth and density make economic development more urgent in the Third World today than in the West in the last century, then the changed scale of warfare and a more unstable international environment should also be taken into account if militaristic regimes are to be recommended as arch modernizers.

What countries have achieved economic development to date as a result of nationalist-communist revolutions? Let us concede the case of the Soviet Union, although the entire issue of whether the Bolshevik October revolution as distinct from the February revolution, let alone Stalin's totalitarian rule, was necessary for Russian economic development remains highly debatable among economists and historians. Heilbroner tells us that for himself he would rather be "an anonymous peasant" in China or Cuba than in India, Peru, or Ecuador.[8] But by his own admission "it may well be that Cuba has suffered a considerable economic decline" since Castro took power, and "we may not know for many years whether the Chinese peasant is better or worse off than before the revolution."[9] He praises Cuba for its educational effort, and China for having freed its youth from the bondage of the traditional family system. However, these achievements—assuming their reality—at most facilitate economic development rather than constituting development itself. Heilbroner might also reflect that the peasants of India and Peru evidently do not share his view of their prospects, having rejected in large numbers the opportunity to vote for Communist parties in free elections. In short, with the ambiguous exception of the Soviet Union, the Communist promise of rapid industrialization remains no more than a promise.

4. HEILBRONER'S CASE for the necessity of totalitarian ruthlessness to achieve modernization rests ultimately on his conviction of the enormous urgency of the problems of the backward countries. They cannot proceed according to the more leisurely timetable of past Western industrialization; they must take a giant step forward within the next three or four decades, or mass famine and internal chaos are sure to be their fate. Essentially, Heilbroner sees the continuing population explosion as imposing the need for an all-out attack on backwardness which must have priority over other values and objectives. Not the entire Third World, but "primarily the crowded land masses and archipelagos of Southeast Asia and the impoverished areas of Central and South America" must look to revolutions led by modernizing elites to rescue them from deepening poverty. The extent to which Heilbroner's argument rests on the population explosion is striking, considering that, though there are many exceptions, economists as a rule are more optimistic than demographers in their estimates of the prospects for economic development in backward countries. Economists perceive the economic job to be done and are impressed by the ample technical resources—including their own counsel—available to do it, while demographers, horrified by the floods of additional people indicated by extrapolated population growth rates, insist that without birth control any development program is doomed to founder.

But are Communist countries likely to check population growth? Heilbroner refers patronizingly to India's failure to control the birth rate, but there is not the slightest evidence that China has had any greater success. Indeed, China's leaders lag behind India's in their awareness of the need for an

[8] Heilbroner in *Commentary*, July 1967, p. 20.

[9] Heilbroner, "Counterrevolutionary America," p. 32.

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antinatalist population policy. The relatively sparsely settled Soviet Union never faced a population explosion comparable to that of Southeast Asia—a further reason, incidentally, for questioning the necessity of totalitarianism for Russian economic development. The doctrinal anti-Malthusianism of Communist ideology imposes a special handicap on Communist countries with regard to birth control. Nor do non-Communist revolutionary elites imbued with aggressive nationalism and anti-Western fervor seem promising candidates to assign high priority to diffusing family planning over building steel mills and armies.

But what if birth rates should turn downward *before* the "takeoff" point in economic development has been reached? In a recent article in *Public Interest,*[10] Donald Bogue, the University of Chicago demographer, departed from the conventional pessimism of his colleagues,[11] to predict the imminent end of the population explosion in the Third World. There is good reason to believe, he insists, that by the end of the present decade the efforts of government and private agencies promoting family planning will at last pay off and birth rates in India and several other Asian countries will begin unmistakably to decline. Bogue is unable to present decisive evidence supporting his forecast—he claims that the "catching on" of new birth-control methods in peasant populations is still too recent to have been statistically recorded. His main tangible evidence is based on studies in several countries, the most impressive of which was conducted in South Korea, showing that peasant women have in surprising numbers adopted in an exceedingly short space of time such recently developed contraceptive methods as intrauterine devices and even pills. Maybe Bogue will turn out to be a false prophet, but it is worth recalling that sharp reversals of demographic trends have happened simultaneously before in a number of quite different countries, so there is no reason why sudden mass adoption of family planning resulting in lower birth rate might not occur in large areas of the Third World. Writing about Latin America, another demographer, J. Mayone Stycos of Cornell, also expresses cautious optimism in a recent book reporting his research in Peru and several Caribbean nations.[12]

5. I HAVE ARGUED that, although the difficulties faced by democratic governments in carrying out economic development are indeed real, totalitarian revolutionary regimes also face difficulties peculiar to them which Heilbroner and others tend to slight. Military dictatorships, a third and at present the most common type of regime in the Third World, have not been notoriously successful modernizers either.[13] One might conclude in an even more pessimistic vein than Heilbroner that neither democracy, revolutionary collectivism, nor military rule are capable of achieving modernization, and that it is therefore unlikely to take place at all. Yet such a conclusion would clearly be unjustified. In the past there have been a variety of paths to modernization: it has been achieved by essentially conservative regimes in Germany and Japan, by postrevolutionary bourgeois democracies in England and France, under a pure bourgeois democracy in the United States, and by Communist dictatorship in Russia; even a few military regimes have made considerable progress as in Turkey and Mexico. There is apparently no intrinsic connection at all between economic progress and formal political institutions. The pace of economic development has also varied greatly, particularly among smaller nations free from the tensions of international rivalry.

[10] Donald Bogue, "The End of the Population Explosion," *Public Interest,* Spring 1967, pp. 11–20.

[11] Including myself. See, for example, Dennis H. Wrong, "Population Myths," *Commentary,* November 1964, pp. 61–64.

[12] J. Mayone Stycos, *Human Fertility in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968).

[13] See William McCord, "Armies and Politics: A Problem in the Third World," DISSENT, July–August 1967, pp. 444–452.

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Democratic institutions such as parliamentary government, elementary civil liberties and the rule of law, though not—except in the United States—universal suffrage, preceded economic development in the Western bourgeois democracies. Why should it be so widely assumed that democracy can only emerge in the Third World after modernization has been carried out by authoritarian governments? Those who argue this confuse the *strong* state that is indeed required for economic development with a monolithic, authoritarian state. The sceptics about democracy, with all their talk of avoiding ethnocentric evaluations of the institutions of non-Western people, often project the experience of Western democracies into the different social context of backward societies. And so these sceptics contend that Asian and African electorates will use the ballot to advance their short-term interests like voters in the West accustomed to government whose rationalized welfare and service functions have succeeded, as Michael Walzer has argued, in demystifying the very idea of the state itself. Actually, the demands of the masses in underdeveloped areas are likely to be too modest rather than excessive from the standpoint of stimulating development.[14] Democracy, moreover, may take many different forms: ancient village communal bodies, such as the old Russian *mir* and the Indian *panchayats,* can serve as two-way communication channels between modernizing elites and the base of the social structure, giving rise to a kind of "democratic centralism" that is a reality rather than a facade for unilateral dictation by the leadership. Also, even after universal suffrage was in effect in the Western democracies, the political organization and mobilization of the lower classes was a long, slow process. The masses in the Third World are not going to leap at once into the political arena to make short-sighted and selfish immediate group demands. There is no reason why they cannot be trusted to accept the guidance of enlightened modernizing elites that truly consult them and give them a sense of participation in the process. It is precisely such a sense of participation that Heilbroner sees as the *forte* of Communist revolutionaries, but there is no inherent reason why they alone should be capable of instilling it.

What about American policy toward the Third World? Although a secondary issue, this was ostensibly the main subject of Heilbroner's essay. Heilbroner's denial notwithstanding, the United States has not been consistently antirevolutionary nor indeed consistently anything except opposed to states that have directly aligned themselves politically and militarily with the Soviet Union or China. The United States has given aid to Communist Yugoslavia, to nationalist, pro-Communist, and anti-American states such as Ghana under Nkrumah, or Algeria and Egypt, as well as to non-Communist revolutionary regimes such as Bolivia in the 1950s. Admittedly, the bulk of American aid has gone to such "client states" ruled by conservative dictatorships as South Korea, Taiwan, and South Vietnam. But American policy has on the whole been shortsightedly opportunistic rather than ideologically consistent, willing to support almost any government, Left or Right, that is not a direct dependency of Russia or China. When Heilbroner suggests that the United States is unlikely to allow any nations in the Third World to remain neutral in the Cold War,[15] he seems to be taking seriously Dulles's rhetoric of a decade ago—even then the rhetoric did not correspond to American practice. More probably, he has in mind the war in Vietnam, but the flimsy American justification for the war rests on the assumption that China is the "real" enemy, not the Viet Cong or Hanoi. The United States accepted, after all, a neutral government in Laos.

Latin America, however, is obviously the area where Heilbroner's label "Counterrevo-

[14] Moskos and Bell, *op. cit.,* p. 69.

[15] Heilbroner in *Commentary,* July 1967, p. 20.

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lutionary America" is most applicable. Not only do the pocketbook interests of American businessmen have a greater influence on government policy there than elsewhere in the world, but the fall-out in domestic politics of victories by Communist or proto-Communist revolutionaries is bound to be far greater. The Dominican tragedy reveals the panic that may strike an American Administration if it persuades itself that there is even the slightest possibility of a repetition of the Cuban experience. It is indeed hard to imagine the United States passively tolerating *any* anti-American, revolutionary government in this hemisphere.

FINALLY, let us suppose that American policy-makers accept Heilbroner's analysis and become convinced that modernization of the Third World is possible only under Communist or authoritarian left-nationalist auspices. The results may be curious indeed. *The New Republic* of July 8, 1967, reports that a privately distributed newsletter subscribed to by Wall Street insiders suggests that it may very well be in the American national interest to allow the Third World to go Communist. The United States will save money in economic aid as the new Communist regimes seek development by sweating their own peasantries whose labor will have to carry the whole burden of capital accumulation. If they fail, the United States cannot be blamed. If they succeed, they will in a decade or two become moderate and "bourgeois" in spirit like the Russians and not only can we live in peace with them but we can engage them in mutually profitable trade. Such a view may very well spread among those whom C. Wright Mills once called "sophisticated conservatives," and it may become more influential than the anger and frustration at the failure of American capitalism to convert the world that Heilbroner imputes to our leaders. And, as is so often the case in politics, the diagnosis may become self-confirming if America reduces instead of expands its aid to the Third World in expectation of a wave of totalitarian revolutions. The Heilbroner thesis might thus ironically help bring about the conditions it claims to deplore in counseling us to resign ourselves to their inevitability.

II. Robert L. Heilbroner Replies

I AM GRATEFUL TO DENNIS WRONG for his thoughtful and carefully argued reply to my article in *Commentary* and to *The Great Ascent*. Here and there I disagree with him on small points, most of which will emerge in the paragraphs below. But in the main I feel that somehow even Wrong, who so scrupulously avoids the rhetoric of outrage, has failed to come squarely to grips with the contentions on which my own point of view is based. Let me therefore attempt to answer him by restating my position and emphasizing where I think the issue lies between us.

1. THE ESSENTIAL STARTING POINT must be whether or not one believes that modernization will take place under the aegis of *present* governments in most of Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Near East.[1] I have made it clear that I do not think it will. What is more, I rather doubt that Wrong would disagree with this pessimistic appraisal, although he would no doubt wish to see it qualified. If this is so, then economic development will have to wait until the regimes that now seem incapable of mounting a successful modernization program are replaced by other regimes. The question is, what kinds will they be?

2. ARE THE CHANCES PROPITIOUS for the emergence of democratic governments as the modernizing forces in these areas? I do not think so for the following reasons, some mentioned by Wrong and some not:

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[1] I omit the Western and Eastern parts of Africa, where the problems of nation-building are now all-important. Nation-building can occur under many kinds of regimes.

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(1) In many states only a revolutionary party will be able to oust the incumbent regimes.

(2) In most nations the tradition of democratic opposition is unknown or thinly held, and the tradition of "strong-man" government very widely accepted.

(3) The changes needed to bring modernization are not only political, but economic, social, intellectual, and even religious. Such deep-seated changes are extraordinarily difficult to achieve under the best of circumstances. I suspect that only authoritarian regimes can impose them.[2]

Against these doubts Wrong suggests some counterarguments. One of these is that "democracy" is capable of many guises. This is certainly true and some measure of "democracy" in a *consultative* sense (e.g., the Russian soviets, at least in theory) may exist even under dictatorships. What cannot, I think, be tolerated is a recognized and potentially powerful *opposition party.*

A second counterargument of Wrong's is that the Western nations have climbed to modernity under various sorts of governments, including a number of democratic (although not always very consultative) ones. This is of course so. The question then arises as to the relevance of Western (or Japanese post-Meiji) experience to the critical areas of the underdeveloped world. I think the relevance is slight for the following reasons:

(1) The population crisis enjoins a much greater degree of haste for the contemporary backward world.

(2) There has been no period of preparation comparable to the three centuries of European commercialization.

(3) The backward world is handicapped by the deformations of imperialism.

Thus I hesitate to apply the lessons of the West to the East and South. However, if Wrong is merely arguing that the developing elites need not display the worst forms of totalitarianism; that a degree of tolerance is compatible with a strong modernization movement; and that a measure of freedom may be functional rather than otherwise, I would not disagree. Much depends on the personalities of the development leader and his opposition, on the tradition and circumstances of the country, etc. Nonetheless, I would argue (and again I doubt that Wrong would disagree) that strong tendencies must exist for extending and deepening the control of leadership, not only over political and economic life but into social and intellectual life as well. Perhaps I should point out, although Wrong has been good enough to do so for me, that in making this prediction I am not saying what I wish to have happen, but only what I think will happen, whether I wish it or not.

3. TAKING OFF FROM THESE premises, I go on to state that left-authoritarian regimes, very likely, although not necessarily Communist, probably offer the best chance for a breakthrough in the backward areas. Here several points are to be examined:

(1) Is such a breakthrough needed? Will not a slower process of change suffice?

As Wrong points out, my prognosis rests heavily on the urgency of the population program. It is this above all that sets the timetable. If Bogue is right, the timetable may be much extended and the necessity for rapid and radical action accordingly reduced. But is Bogue right? I am certainly far from convinced, and evidently neither is Wrong. Moreover, even if population growth *slows down,* will the deceleration come in time to avert economic and social crisis? Do not forget that populations will double in the most impoverished areas by the year 2000.

(2) Will a revolutionary regime succeed in "breaking through"?

[2] And they will be *imposed.* Modernization is a kind of cultural imperialism that is forced upon the masses. Hence it means little to claim, no doubt correctly, that the peasants do not like Communists. They will not like any zealous modernizers. And no other kind will succeed.

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One cannot be sure. As Wrong points out, a Communist government may be ideologically unable to institute birth control. Or its ideological fervor, etc., may fall on deaf ears. Or it may just make terrible mistakes. In that case, I should think the probable outcome would be that mentioned at the end of his piece—there will be *no* modernization, and the future will be one of gradual deterioration, starvation, etc. I consider this an entirely possible state of affairs for the next generation. Yet one must ask, What is the chance for modernization if there is not an all-out revolutionary effort? This brings us back to my initial two premises.

(3) Is there any evidence that the Communists can mount a successful development effort?

Wrong states that the Communists have so far delivered no more than promises. I would reply that promises are better than nothing. But are they only promises? Russia, to be sure, is a great mystery—is her development the result of Communism or of pre-1913 industrialization? I would suggest that without Communism Russia would today be a kind of Brazil, with the extremes of Sao Paolo and the San Francisco Valley. But that is only a guess. The evidence as to Cuba buttresses my feeling that Castro has instituted a genuine and deeply rooted change. Now as for China, who knows? What matters is that the outcome after the present power struggle is resolved. I am impressed by Edgar Snow's observation in *The Other Side of the River* that whatever one may think of the Communist effort, there is no doubt that China has been profoundly and irreversibly changed. It is this kind of change that I believe to be an absolutely necessary condition for development; and at the base of my argument is my belief that among the existing political forces in the world only Communism is likely to be able to administer such a change. What other force does anyone suggest?

4. WRONG EMPHASIZES the destructive side of authoritarianism and its penchant for war.[3] There is something to be said for this, although I fear that democracy provides no guarantee of peace. (Do I dare mention India and Goa; England and Suez; France and Algeria; and the U.S. and its military adventures?)

But once again I am forced back to choosing between ugly alternatives. Revolutionary regimes bring a ruthless will and a desire to change "everything"; nonrevolutionary regimes seem unable to change even the few things that cry out for it. *If* we could have the best of both worlds—the enthusiasm, the dedication, the clear-cut program of the revolutionary, and the tolerance, open-mindedness, and decency of the gradualist—who would not welcome it? But I fear that in the existing condition of things we will have to make a far less palatable choice. If so, I opt for the party of "total" change. I repeat that if I had to take my chances here and now as an anonymous particle of humanity in China or India or in Cuba or Brazil, I would unhesitatingly choose the Communist side. Furthermore, I suspect Wrong would too. (To be sure, if I could choose to be an intellectual in both nations I would opt for the other side. But only a tiny few of the particles of humanity are intellectuals.)

5. LAST, I AM NOT much alarmed over the possibility of my counsel becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.[4] Even if it were, I would prefer the difficulties of living in a world that was largely Communist in the backward areas and isolationist here in the U.S., to one that threatens to go Communist and that evokes from us the military response of a Vietnam. But in the end I am interested in

[3] Let me object in passing that armies are not "utter waste" in backward areas. They are often very useful as a means of performing labor tasks, educating the peasants, and instilling morale.

[4] If I may be allowed one more footnote, I would also suggest that the temper of revolutionary regimes will be affected to some extent by our own attitudes. Certainly one reason for their bellicosity (I do not say the only reason) has been our own intransigent opposition to them.

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making a historical forecast, not in preparing a blueprint for action. My forecast is that if modernization takes place in the backward world (and again I caution that it may not), it will be because of the efforts of revolutionary, and very likely Communist, regimes. I forecast as well that the successes of milder, democratic government in bringing modernization to the peoples of Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East will be small, if any. Let us wait 10 or 20 years and see which of us is right.

III. A Rebuttal by Dennis H. Wrong

I AM GLAD Robert Heilbroner finds that I have correctly understood and presented his views. He has done as well with mine, and I hope that the absence of rhetoric and polemical flourishes in our exchange will clarify the issues between us.

Heilbroner reiterates his conviction that left-authoritarian or communist movements "offer the best chance for a breakthrough in the backward areas." Whether he is right or wrong in this belief, he fails fully to confront the prior question of how likely in the near future such movements are to come to power at all and win the chance to show what they can do. Far from foreseeing any upsurge of democratic modernizing forces in the Third World, I argued that the present trend was toward the overthrow of *both* democratic governments and left-authoritarian regimes by the armed forces. Heilbroner is more hopeful—given his assumptions—than I am that there will be successful Communist revolutions; I am more hopeful than he that some modernization will take place under a variety of political regimes. He apparently regards such recent events as China's declining prestige in the Third World, the turmoil inside China, the overthrow of left-nationalist "strong men" in Indonesia, Algeria, and Ghana, the misadventures of "Arab socialism," and the repeated failures and defeats of Cuban-sponsored guerrillas in Latin America as mere eddies in a broad historical current favoring revolutionary authoritarian regimes and movements. I, on the contrary, think that the Viet Cong may be the leaders of the last Communist-directed "war of national liberation" rather than the forerunners of a new revolutionary wave.

But if Heilbroner is right and Communist revolutions do take place in much of the Third World, can they achieve modernization? Communists have won power primarily by their own efforts in only five countries: Russia, Yugoslavia, China, North Vietnam, and Cuba. None of the three conditions Heilbroner adduces for doubting the relevance of past Western experience to the contemporary underdeveloped world was fully present in Russia or Yugoslavia, so their record is scarcely more pertinent to the argument than the successful modernization achieved under democratic auspices by England and the United States. As to China, I agree with Heilbroner—who knows?—China may indeed have been "profoundly and irreversibly changed," but such change may or may not in the end facilitate the particular kind of "profound and irreversible change" we call modernization. In its exaltation of an ascetic, chiliastic revolutionary brotherhood, Mao's "cultural revolution" appears to be directed *against* assigning high priority to economic development and the materialism it inevitably brings rather than the reverse. North Vietnam has been involved in wars for over a decade. Cuba, a partially modernized country before Castro, has at most established some of the prerequisites for balanced modernization (e.g., mass literacy) while undergoing actual economic decline. I agree that promises are better than nothing, but Communists are not the only people in the Third World promising modernization.

The very polycentrism of the Communist world that makes nonsense out of the anti-Communist slogans invoked by Washington to justify the Vietnam war reduces the likelihood that future national Communist regimes will be the ruthless modernizers Heil-

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broner expects them to be. Would Egyptian national communism differ in any important way from Nasser's regime? Would an Algerian revolution create a state markedly different from the Ben Bella and Boumedienne dictatorships? Revolutions led by hard-bitten, Moscow-trained Stalinist orgmen might have a chance of successfully using totalitarian methods to impose the drastic surgery of modernization on a recalcitrant peasantry. So might revolutions led by men like Mao's original cadres. So might revolutions led by orthodox Marxist-Leninists like most of the national Communists of Eastern Europe. But post-Stalinist Moscow no longer tightly controls the Communist parties in the Third World (or, indeed, anywhere), and Maoism today has little in common with traditional Marxist-Leninist doctrine. Revolutionary movements in the Third World are likely to be shaped to a greater extent by national character traits than was the case in past Communist revolutions and such traits have usually been an obstacle—though by no means the only one—to modernization. The degree to which Communist parties in the Third World base themselves on dissatisfied ethnic, religious, and caste minority groups in their struggle against existing governments has been documented by Donald Zagoria [in "Communism in Asia," *Commentary,* February 1965, pp. 53–58]. Can we really expect such parties, should they win power, to be as relentlessly future-minded as the puritanical, iron-willed Bolsheviks who are the prototypes for our model of totalitarian modernization?

If Heilbroner is right that Communist revolutions offer the only hope for modernization and I am right in doubting that there will be many successful revolutions in the near future, then the obvious conclusion is that there may be little or no modernization and that economic deterioration and political fragmentation are likely results. I agree that this is an entirely possible outcome for the next generation. It seems to me much more probable that disciplined, authoritarian revolutionaries will be able to seize power under conditions of mass famine and chaos than that they will succeed in overthrowing present governments which are maintaining some degree of order and economic progress, painfully slow though the latter may be. After all, in four of the five countries where indigenous communist movements have triumphed (Cuba is the one exception), the Communist seizure of power occurred during or immediately after devastating wars and foreign invasions that had disrupted agricultural life and destroyed the control of the previous governments over much of their territories. In such circumstances, determined revolutionary movements have their best chance of succeeding. But this possibility is not what Heilbroner has in mind: he sees Communist revolutions as a way of *averting* political and economic collapse rather than as an eventual consequence of collapse.

The issue of the timetable for modernization is really the crucial one. I agree that none of the existing regimes in the Third World, neither the formal democracies, the collectivist one-party states, nor the military dictatorships, have achieved full modernization. But "when we look at the positive side of our ledger sheet, we perceive an astonishing fact. Against all the obstacles to development that we have described, economic progress has in fact been taking place, and at a pace which by comparison with the past amazes us with its rapidity." So writes Robert Heilbroner on page 89 of his book *The Great Ascent.* He immediately observes that both the gains already achieved as well as future gains risk "being washed out by population growth."

Now I am indeed not fully convinced that Donald Bogue is right in predicting the imminent end of the population explosion. Who can have complete confidence in any forecast of something that has never happened before, such as the mass adoption of birth control by peasant populations within a de-

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cade or two? But the probability of this happening seems to me somewhat greater than the probability of a wave of Communist revolutions in the Third World followed by the rapid achievement of modernization by the revolutionary regimes. The populations of the advanced countries, including Japan, have altered their childbearing habits in very short periods of time and without having been exposed to large-scale, state-directed campaigns urging them to do so. Since I wrote my original article, another leading American demographer, Frank Notestein, president of the Population Council, has expressed in the October *Foreign Affairs* qualified optimism over the prospect of new birth-control methods spreading in the underdeveloped world and reducing current rates of population growth before the end of the century. If this should happen it will not remove entirely the urgency of the need for rapid modernization in the larger, more densely populated areas, for even a rate of growth that is half the present one (and this Notestein considers possible) will still be an economic burden. But slower population growth will certainly make it easier for any regime committed to modernization to make some progress and will allow a wider margin for retrievable error.

I am aware that Heilbroner is making a forecast rather than advocating a course of action. But forecasts can become self-fulfilling if those who possess power are persuaded by and act on them. I too would prefer a Communist Third World and an isolationist United States to a succession of Vietnams; but is Heilbroner really prepared to give up all hope that the United States and the West in general can have any constructive influence on the economic development of the backward areas? Did the author of *The Future as History* mean by that phrase that it is as futile in the end to reflect on what still might be as it is to mourn over what might have been? □

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Michael Walzer

Politics in the Welfare State

Concerning the Role of American Radicals

One day, not soon, the welfare state will extend its benefits to all those men and women who are at present its occasional victims, its nominal or partial members. That day will not be the end of political history. But it will represent the end of a particular history, and one in which socialists have been very much involved, if not always on our own terms.

It is worth reflecting on what that day will be like—what will we want *then?*—even while we fight to perfect the system of benefits and argue among ourselves about the best strategies. For we are not entering, we are not going to enter, the new world of state-administered prosperity all at once. It is in the nature of the welfare state, I think, that men break into it in groups, some sooner, some much later, some with only moderate difficulty, some after long and bloody struggles. Many of us are inside already, better served by machines and bureaucrats than men ever were by servants and slaves. What do we want *now?*

Liberal theorists of the welfare state have always claimed to know what we want. Their work rests on two assumptions: first, that politics ought to be the instrument of human desire; second, that the nature of human desire is obvious. People want pleasure, but such pleasure as cannot be shared, individual delight, egoistic satisfaction. The state cannot at the moment provide any sort of direct delight; perhaps one day it will simply administer the appropriate chemicals to its members. Today it can provide only the material prerequisites of individual delight, that is, first security, and then all those services conveniently grouped under the rubric of "welfare"—education, public health, economic controls, relief for the aged and the unemployed, and so on. These are vitally important services, and liberal theory is vindicated, at least in part, by the fact that they are in great demand. Every attempt to restrict them to selected groups of people has been, and will surely continue to be, resisted. The welfare state has grown through invasion—a clear tribute to its attractiveness.

In the heat of battle, goals have sometimes been suggested which elude or transcend the liberal definition of human desire. Wild hopes for equality and fraternity have been proclaimed. But each success has turned out to be a further triumph for what might best be called political utilitarianism. If we or our ancestors or our comrades in this or that struggle have sought the actuality of freedom and love, we have settled readily enough for the pursuit of private happiness—so readily, indeed, that it would be difficult to deny that private happiness is all we ever wanted.

The cumulative effects, the likely future effects, of these successive triumphs are now becoming visible, even though there are important victories yet to be won (and the

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last battles may be the hardest). What I propose in this essay is a theoretical examination of these effects, of the welfare state as our collective project, our common future. I want to argue that the success, or the likely success, of welfarism makes necessary (as it makes possible) a new and radical challenge to political utilitarianism. Whatever the nature of our past demands, what we want *next* is not on any of the liberal lists. But first I must try to suggest the enormous achievements and the special characteristics of welfare politics. For we cannot say what it is we want, until we have understood what we have got and are getting.

First of all, the development of the welfare state has generated a pervasive enlightenment about the functions of political organizations. For the first time in history, masses of men know with absolute clarity that the state ought to be doing something for them. They are rationalists-of-everyday-life, each one demanding, "What has it done for me?" Prewelfare theorists have generally denied the validity of this simple question, insisting that the state always *is* more than it *does*. They have described it as a closely-knit body, dense and opaque, whose members were involved emotionally as well as materially, mysteriously as well as rationally, in the fate of the whole. The members ought to be involved, it was said, not for the sake of concrete benefits of any sort, but, simply, for the sake of communion. Since loyalty was a gift for which there was to be no necessary return, it could not be predicated on anything so clear-cut as interest. It depended instead on all sorts of ideological and ceremonial mystification: anointed kings, oaths, rituals, divine laws, and so on.

The state still does depend on ideology and mystery, but to a far lesser degree than ever before. It has been the great triumph of liberal theorists and politicians to undermine every sort of political divinity, to shatter all the forms of ritual obfuscation, and to turn the mysterious oath into a rational contract. The state itself they have made over from a "body-politic" into a machine, the instrument of its citizens (rather than their mythical common life), devoted to what Jeremy Bentham called "welfare-production." It is judged, as it ought to be, by the amounts of welfare it produces and by the justice and efficiency of its distributive system.

Political unreason survives, of course, and especially in the form of an extraordinary devotion to the modern nation-state and to its leaders, a collective zeal all-too-often unmitigated by individual interest or by any demand for functional transparency. But here too the direction of political utilitarianism is clearly marked out. Thus an eighteenth-century *philosophe:* "What is patriotism? It is an enlightened love of ourselves, which teaches us to love the government which protects us . . . the society which works for our happiness." This definition suggests that many of us are patriotic, if we are, for wrong or inadequate reasons. I will try to describe some of these reasons a little later on.

SECOND, THE EXPANSION of welfare production gives to the state a new and thoroughly rational legitimacy. The state is always immoral when viewed from the standpoint of its invisible and degraded men. Whatever the ideologies of which they are the primary victims, oppressed classes come eventually to regard the claims of their rulers with a deep-rooted skepticism and hostility.

But the claims of the liberals are of a different sort, not mysterious but hypocritical. Therefore the hostility of the oppressed takes a new form: not sullen and inarticulate disbelief, but a positive demand that the claims be realized. Do the middle classes claim to increase the general prosperity? Let them increase *our* prosperity. Do the police claim to defend public security? Let them defend *our* security. Do the rulers of the welfare state claim to maximize the happi-

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ness of the greatest number? Let them maximize *our* happiness.

Now insofar as the state becomes a general welfare state, excluding nobody, it meets these demands and so generates a legitimacy such as no previous political system has ever achieved. If no man is invisible, the state is not immoral. The recognition of its members as concrete individuals with needs and desires may seem a minimal requirement of any political system and hardly capable of producing significant moral attachments. In fact, however, such recognition, when it is finally achieved, will be the outcome of centuries of struggle; the right to be visible is always hard-won; and the liberal state which finally recognizes all men and grants them their humanity will inherit from those centuries an extraordinary moral power. The state will never again be so easy to challenge as it was in the days of mass invisibility.

THIRD, THE DEVELOPMENT of the welfare state has gone hand-in-hand with a transformation in the scale of political organization. This is due not only to increases in the rates of infant and adult survival—the first benefit of the welfare state is life—but also to the progressive extension of political membership to previously invisible men. The tiny political public of an earlier period has been broken into by successive waves of lower-class invaders. It has expanded to absorb each wave; it will probably expand to absorb each future wave.

Liberal theorists and politicians have discovered that there are no necessary limits on the size of the public—so long as its members are conceived as individual recipients of benefits, so long as the problems of political communion, the sharing of a common life, are carefully avoided. Now that there really are concrete benefits to be divided, the first political problem is distribution. And the members of the state, precisely because they are recognized as needful persons, seen by the impersonal public eye and assisted by an impersonal administration, need no longer be able to recognize and assist one another. The size of the citizen body of a Greek polis, like that of an early modern aristocracy, was limited by the requirement that its members be known to each other and so distinguishable from the faceless mass. But once invisibility is banished, the need for political "friendship" is also banished. The members of the welfare state need not have even the most remote acquaintance with each other. And so the welfare state is potentially of infinite extent.

THE FOURTH TENDENCY of successful welfare production is to decrease the importance of politics itself and to turn the state from a political order into an administrative agency. This was always the goal of liberalism and it is the key reason for the liberal insistence upon the transparent material purposes of the state. Beyond welfare the liberal state cannot go: the world of the mind, philosophy, art, literature and religion; the world of the emotions, friendship, sex and love—all these have been set outside its limits. They have been freed from politics, protected against heavy-handed and intolerant magistrates. Simultaneously, liberal politics has been freed from philosophy, art, literature, religion, friendship, sex and love.

Politics is now concerned only with the provision of a plentiful and enjoyable external world and with the promotion of longevity so that this world can be enjoyed as long as possible. And it has been the assumption of liberal theorists ever since Hobbes and Locke that once security and welfare were assured, once the utilitarian purposes of politics were achieved, men would turn away from public to private life, to business and family, or to religion and self-cultivation. Indeed, it was this turning away—which might be called legitimate apathy since it rests on the satisfaction of all recognized needs and desires—that would assure the stability of the liberal achievement. Conflict would disappear; the state would become a neutral agency for the administration of se-

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curity and welfare. This was a liberal even before it was a Marxian vision, as Marx himself suggested when he wrote that political emancipation, as practiced by the liberals, "was at the same time the emancipation of civil society from politics."

The state is an instrument and not an end in itself. Politics is an activity with a purpose and not itself an enjoyable activity. These are axioms of liberal enlightenment; the attack upon the opacity of the traditional polity turns out to be an attack upon the value of political life. Why should we be active in politics? asked Thomas Hobbes, and his sarcastic reply suggests the central animus of liberal theory:

> —to have our wisdom undervalued before our own faces; by an uncertain trial of a little vain-glory to undergo most certain enmities . . . to hate and be hated . . . to lay open our secret councils and advices to all, to no purpose and without any benefit; to neglect the affairs of our own families.

So long as the state establishes peace and —added later liberal writers—promotes welfare, public activity is a waste of time, positively dysfunctional in the economy of private life. Happiness begins and ends at home. One of the ways in which the welfare state promotes happiness is by encouraging men to stay home. Hence the crucial principles of welfare distribution are, first, that benefits ought to be distributed to individuals and, second, that they ought to be designed to enhance private worlds. In the perfected welfare state, enjoyment will always be private; only administration will be public; the policeman and the welfare administrator will be the only public men.

NOW OBVIOUSLY THIS is no description of our present experience. Never in human history has politics been so important to so many people, never have so many been active in politics, as in the past century and a half. Never before has the state stood at the center of so large a circle of conflict, agitation, and maneuver. Politics has been the crucial means of becoming visible, of winning recognition for mass needs and desires. Nor has it been only a means: political activity has also brought the first joyful sense of membership in a community. It has provided the positive pleasures of self-assertion and mutual recognition, of collective effort and achievement.

Unlike the welfare state itself, the struggle groups which have demanded and won the various benefits the state now provides—the unions, parties, and movements—have been shaped to a human scale; their members have also been colleagues; they have called one another brethren, citizens, comrades. For a brief moment in time they created a communion which was not mysterious or opaque precisely because it was a common creation.

As the organizations of the oppressed win their battles, however, they are gradually integrated into the system of welfare administration. Their purposes are not given up, or not wholly given up, but rather give rise, under new circumstances, to new organizational forms: the struggle groups become pressure groups. Public life ceases to engage the minds and emotions of their members; local activity drops off; popular participation declines sharply. The tenacious sense of detail peculiar to highly qualified bureaucrats replaces the enthusiasm of members: it is more useful, even to the members themselves.

The pleasures of political struggle cannot be sustained once victory has been won. And it is in the nature of the infinitely expandable welfare state that victories can, in fact, be won. Thus it happens that communion is replaced by distribution, generalized aspiration by concrete expectation. Erstwhile militants are isolated and immobilized by the sheer size of the state into which they have won admission, mollified by its apparent legitimacy, by the obvious sincerity of its administrators and the transparency of their purposes. The history of the welfare state begins with the coerced passivity of invisible

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and degraded men, mystified by ideology. And it ends, or will one day end, with the voluntary passivity of enlightened men, their human desires recognized and (in part) gratified by the public authorities. So, at any rate, we have been led to believe by liberal writers.

What more can we possibly ask?

All these developments—the growing rationality and legitimacy of the state, the vast increase in its size, and the decline of political life—are not only compatible with classical liberal theory, but actually represent its fulfillment. But there is one further corollary of welfare production which raises the most serious problems for liberalism: the growth of state power.

There can be no question that the development of welfare programs has involved (or required) an extraordinary expansion of the machinery of everyday state administration and therefore an increase in the degree, intensity, and detail of social control. In part, this increase stems directly from the progressive enlargement of bureaucratic systems and from improvements in the training and discipline of their personnel. But it is also closely related to the very nature of the utilitarian service state and to the character of the political struggles of the past century and a half.[1]

For all that time liberals (and socialists too) have been like that character of Gogol's who "wanted to bring the government into everything, even into his daily quarrels with his wife"—though some of them would have stopped short at the seat of domestic bliss. Everywhere else the agents of government have been invited to roam. This was true even during the brief moment of *laissez-faire*, for the restrictions on commerce which were then overcome were largely local and corporate, and only the central government could overcome them.

Indeed, the state has been an instrument absolutely necessary to reformers of every sort: it shatters the authority of local and traditional elites; it destroys the old corporations and regulates the new ones; it establishes minimal standards for masses of men whose own organizations, however powerful, cannot do so by themselves: it protects racial and religious minorities. It is, so to speak, the crucial licensing agency of modern society, increasingly the only one; it accords recognition, turning oppressed subjects into full-fledged members. And it absorbs the power of every defunct agency as it wins the support of every newly enfranchised member.

Nor is its usefulness at an end. Given the continued creation of new groups, the continued raising of the level of material desire, the perfection of welfare production may well be an asymptotic goal and the state an eternally progressive force. But this does not mean that the character of political struggle will remain unchanged as new groups and new desires replace the old. For from a certain point in time, the new groups will almost certainly cease to have the same communal structure as the old. The deprivations of their members are more likely to be experienced by each man in his private, state-protected world, experienced simultaneously but not shared.

Thus the Negro is one kind of invisible man, bound to his fellows in a community of suffering and anger and therefore capable of collective action. The man who drives a dangerous car or breathes polluted air is another kind, largely unaware of the risks he shares with others, only marginally aware of the existence of others, and probably incapable of significant efforts on his own behalf. Precisely because of the privatizing results of the benefits he has already won (his automobile, for example), he now stands

[1] The single greatest factor in the expansion of state power has, of course, been external war, and it is probably true that the greatest dangers posed by the modern liberal state are not those which its own citizens must face. But I have, perhaps arbitrarily, excluded foreign policy and war from this discussion.

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alone and helpless in the face of one or another sort of corporate power. He is dependent upon the muckraking of free-lance journalists and academic experts and, much more, upon the benevolence of the state.

This benevolence has its price: the increased power of the benevolent administrators, the increasing control over the recipients of benefits. Perhaps the most impressive feature of modern welfare administration is the sheer variety of its coercive and deterrent instruments. Every newly recognized need, every service received, creates a new dependency and so a new social bond.

"A wife and a child are so many pledges a man gives to the world for his good behavior," wrote Jeremy Bentham. This is true only insofar as the world—economy and state—actually provides or promises a decent living to the wife and child. If it does, the pledge is serious indeed. And the better the living the world promises, the more good behavior it requires. Welfare politics thus has a dialectical pattern: pressure from below for more protection or benefits meets pressure from above for better (more disciplined, or orderly, or sociable) behavior. A balance is struck, breaks down, is struck again. Each new balance is achieved at a higher level of welfare production, includes more people, provides new reasons (and new sanctions) for good behavior.

Eventually, every antisocial act is interpreted as a demand for increased benefits. So it is. And so welfare is the obvious and only antidote to delinquency and riot. For who would be unwilling, if actually given the chance, to pay the price of social discipline, orderly conduct, hard work, and public decency for the sake of the pursuit of happiness? Only much later does it turn out that the price and the purchase are very nearly the same thing. Happiness *is* good behavior, and this equation, fervently endorsed by the authorities, is the ultimate sanction.

Like the public recognition of needs, so the recognition of men—our hard-won visibility—becomes a source of intensified social control. Never have ordinary citizens been so well-known to the public authorities as in the welfare state. We are all counted, numbered, classified, catalogued, polled, interviewed, watched, and filed away. The IBM card is the very means of our visibility, the guarantee that we are not forgotten among so many millions—even as it is simultaneously a symbol of our bondage to the bureaucratic machine.

Invisible men are invisible first of all to the officials of the state (and that is a worse bondage). Precisely because they are not seen as citizens, they are exposed to arbitrary cruelty and neglect. Because they are not numbered, they are always treated *en masse*. Because they are never polled, they are thought to have no opinions. Even their crimes, so long as they injure only one another, are not recorded. When their country goes to war, they are impressed (that is, kidnapped), but not conscripted. Gradually, with the development of the welfare state, all this changes. An extraordinary traffic opens up between the visible and the previously invisible sections of society. Individuals and groups win public recognition, learn good behavior, and march out of the slums and ghettos. At the same time, policemen, census takers, recruiting officers, tax collectors, welfare workers, radical organizers, and sociologists (in roughly that historical order) march in.

In the long run, the two parts of society will merge into one world of absolutely visible men (that does not mean a world of equals), known not to each other but to the specialists in such knowledge, not personally but statistically. The universal character of this new knowledge doubtless will protect individuals from magisterial whim and prejudice. That is one of its purposes. But it will also involve a new kind of exposure: to the developing administrative sciences of anticipation and prevention.

"It's the anarchy of poverty/Delights me . . ." wrote William Carlos Williams. He

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was too easily delighted, or rather, his delight was that of an onlooker and not a participant in the "anarchic" culture of the poor. Few men who are actually poor would share it. But having said that, it is still worth adding: *It's the regiment of the contented/ That haunts me.*

Liberals have not been unaware of the dangers of administrative tyranny. Wherever possible they have sought to avoid even benevolent regimentation by giving those whose welfare is at stake "sovereign" power, that is, by establishing governments representative of everyone who receives benefits. In the past that has generally meant of all property owners, for they have been the most important welfare recipients. It obviously means more today, though just how much more is unclear.

The expansion of the range of state benefits and the extension of the ballot to new social groups have been parallel and related processes. Suffrage is the first badge of membership; it is a means of winning benefits and also, presumably, of determining their character and the nature of their administration. In practice, however, it is something less than this. "Welfare without representation," Sargeant Shriver has said, "is tyranny." That is certainly true. But it is not the case that the only alternative to tyranny is a full-scale democracy.

In theory, of course, the purpose of representative government is to make the mass of people all-powerful. Representatives are to be delegates, asserting popular desires, and then legislators, enacting the popular will. Administrators are to be nothing more than servants of the people, bound absolutely by legislative decree. The quality of security and welfare is thus popularly determined, at only one remove. The government of representatives cannot be made responsible to the people on a day-to-day basis, but its general responsibility can be maintained by periodic elections and, more important, by continuous political activity between elections. The ultimate defense against bureaucratic omnicompetence is the self-interested assertiveness of ordinary men.

If things have not worked out this way, and do not seem likely to, it is at least partly because liberals never developed a system of democratic activism sufficient to bind administrators to representatives and representatives to constituents. Political parties might have served this purpose, but in the U.S., at least, parties have not developed as membership organizations capable of stimulating commitment and action on the grass-roots level. Local politics has never been competitive with business and family. And it has been discovered that the enhancement of private life through public welfare really does not require any very rigorous and energetic self-government. It may well require a period of sustained struggle, but once that has been won, continued political participation (beyond occasional voting) seems unnecessary and even uneconomical.

Nor is it obvious that the closely articulated representative system that might make such activity worthwhile is really feasible, given the potentially infinite size and the extraordinary administrative complexity of the modern state. Administration has already outdistanced every other branch of government in the sheer accumulation of resources: competent staff, statistical knowledge, patronage, fiscal controls, regulatory powers, secrecy when that is required, publicity when it is not, and so on. Legislative activity has ceased in virtually every respect to be the central feature of the governmental process. It has been replaced in part by administration itself, in part by bargaining between state bureaucrats and the (non-elected) representatives of a great variety of social constituencies.

Thus a modern worker or farmer is far more usefully represented, his interests more successfully defended, by the Washington-based lobbyist of his union than by his locally based congressman. This is true even though his congressman is elected in a demo-

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cratic fashion, while the officers of his union are probably co-opted and the lobbyist appointed. It is virtually a law of political life that power be imitated, that those who seek benefits copy the organizational style of those who dispense benefits. Today it is palpably the executive rather than the legislative branch of government that is copied. At least, it is copied by those secondary associations already within the welfare system; outside, other models are still possible. In any case, the electoral process has gradually taken on the character of an outer limit, a form of ultimate popular defense rather than of popular self-government, while the day-to-day visibility of workers and farmers and the legitimacy of their government are both maintained by processes largely, though by no means entirely, independent of democratic elections. The modern welfare state is an example of limited government, but not yet of popular sovereignty.

The failure of self-government reveals the fundamental difficulty of liberal utilitarianism. Its standard of utility is the welfare of an individual absolutely free to make his own choices and measure his own happiness. In fact, however, no such individual has ever existed.

Men live in groups and always find that they have limited choices and share, without having chosen, social measurements. If they are ever free to choose new limits and measurements, they must do so in some cooperative fashion, arguing among themselves, reaching a common decision. But to do this, to act collectively like the sovereign individual of the utilitarians, they must share political power. Government must be responsive to their concrete wills and not merely (as at present) to their conventionally defined desires. If they do not share power, they inevitably become the prisoners of the established social systems which they invade or into which they are admitted.

State recognition of new groups obviously affects the structure of social power and value, but there is very little evidence to suggest that it does so in fundamental ways. It clearly does not do so in the ways anticipated during the long struggles for recognition, that is, it does not open the way to social and economic equality. The welfare state has turned out to be perfectly compatible with inequality. Bureaucratic benevolence even bolsters inequality insofar as it neutralizes the struggle groups, decomposing and privatizing popular willfulness. Fundamental social change would require that the state embody this willfulness, inviting its new members to choose their own limits and measurements. This it does not, perhaps cannot, do.

Instead, welfare administrators function, whether consciously or not, as double agents: serving the minimal material interests of the invaders and upholding at the same time the social system that is being invaded. That is why welfare administration, especially in its more direct forms (social work, for example), tends so generally toward paternalism. The administrators are committed in advance to the common limits and measurements, to the established modes of security and welfare. They are knowledgeable about these modes and patronizing toward anyone who is ignorant or uncommitted. But the invaders have burst into a world they never chose. They have to be helped, guided, educated in the acceptable forms of aspiration and action. They are, in a word, newly licensed to have needs, but not yet intentions or plans of their own.

The perfected welfare state will bring with it an end to the terrible oppressiveness of poverty and invisibility. Once all men are recognized as members (even if only by a distant and powerful government), the sheer magnitude of state terrorism and economic exploitation, and so of human misery, will be enormously reduced. At the same time, it needs to be said that security and welfare are not open-ended categories whose final character will be determined by the freedmen of the liberal state. The pursuit of pri-

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vate happiness may be endless, but its direction, for most of us, is given. The newer welfare recipients are not and are not likely to become self-determining men; they remain subject to the determinations of others, not only in the state, but in society and economy as well. Indeed, the established forms of social and economic (that is, corporate) power are likely to be strengthened just as state power has been strengthened: by the general expansion in scale, by the increase in legitimacy that derives from the admission, however reluctant, of all outsiders, by the universal improvement in everyday social behavior, by the new forms of bureaucratic surveillance and record-keeping. For these same reasons, the individual member is taken into account in a new way. When his rulers claim to serve him, the claim is not a lie; it is his political destiny to receive services. The reception of services brings freedom of a limited sort, but of a sort rare enough to be valuable. The citizen of the welfare state is free (and, in many cases, newly enabled) to pursue private happiness within the established social and economic system. He is not free to shape or reshape the system, for he has not seized and, except in minimal ways, he does not share political power.

There is no readily accessible meaning in the frequent assertion that socialism lies "beyond the welfare state." No evidence suggests that socialism represents the next stage of history, or that the full development of welfare production entails a socialist society. "Beyond," in that hopeful phrase, has neither a historical nor a logical sense.

Although socialist parties and movements have often been in the forefront of the struggle for welfare, and above all for equality in the distribution of benefits, it remains true that socialist theory belongs to a tradition of thought and aspiration not only different from, but also in perennial competition with liberal utilitarianism. Against the utilitarians, socialists have argued that mere private life, however enhanced by state action, cannot sustain a significant human culture; that the family does not provide an adequate arena for the human emotions; that man has both a mind and a passion for society; that he requires an active public life. Against the private man of liberal theory, socialists have defended the free citizen.[2]

This disagreement is in no sense adequately summed up in the words "individualism" and "collectivism." In both traditions, the individual is recognized as the ultimate value; socialists and liberals unite in opposing any ideology which assigns to the state a moral being independent of the willfulness and rationality of its particular members. But to deny the claims of statist ideologies is not necessarily to assert a purely instrumentalist political theory.

Individual men can still recognize the pleasures of politics, can still choose political life as an end-in-itself. For politics is something more than welfare production. It is a vital and exciting world of work and struggle; of aspiration, initiative, intrigue, and argument; of collective effort, mutual recognition, and *amour social;* of organized hostility; of public venture and social achievement; of personal triumph and failure.

The welfare state offers no satisfactory substitute for any of these. Its theorists claim that all the intellectual and emotional energies of political men can be rechanneled into private life, and their creativity co-opted by intelligent administrators. Neither

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[2] Utilitarianism is not, of course, the only form of liberal politics; liberals have also been interested in local government and voluntary association; pluralism, before it became an ideological catchword, was as much a liberal as a socialist theory, and for both liberals and socialists it emphasized the values of political participation and communal life. But I don't think it is unfair to suggest that utilitarianism has been for some time the dominant form of liberalism and, more important, that it has been the central creed of liberals-in-power. I suppose utilitarianism has also been the central creed of socialists-in-power, but socialists, perhaps fortunately for socialism, have been in power less often.

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of these claims is true. The welfare state requires the virtual withering away of political energy and the disappearance, at least from public life, of any very significant popular creativity. This requirement is first of all an extreme restriction upon the pursuit of happiness—because political activity is or might be one of the forms that pursuit takes for many people. Even more important, it involves a surrender of everyone's say in the determination of further restrictions (or expansions), a surrender of any popular role in determining the shape and substance, the day-to-day quality, of our common life. This is the socialist indictment of liberal utilitarianism.

The terms of the indictment have not often been made clear in the recent past because so many of us who regard ourselves as socialists have found a kind of political fulfillment in the struggles for the welfare state. We have allied ourselves with the crowds of men battering at the gates of American society. Their cause has been our public passion. This will continue to be so for some time to come, probably for the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, as we campaign for this or that welfare measure, we are driven to ask ourselves John Stuart Mill's famous question: "Suppose that . . . all the changes in institutions and opinions which you [are] looking forward to could be completely effected at this very instant: would this be a joy and a happiness to you?" And as with Mill, so with us "an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answers, No!"

The welfare state is not the name of our desire. And what is more, the achievement of the welfare state might well entail the end of that public activity which has until now been a joy and a happiness to us. When contemporary writers talk about the "end of ideology," the disappearance of generalized aspiration, they are describing just this closing down of the possibilities for public intellectual and emotional commitment. Though their announcements are at the very least premature, they linger in our minds as disturbing predictions.

But if we are right in thinking that there are human desires that the welfare state cannot fulfill, then surely these desires will continue to be expressed in the form of collective demands and claims. If men really do seek the common achievements and shared excitements of politics, then they will have them, in one form or another. And they will produce new ideologies to validate their new activities.

In a sense, the welfare state makes these new activities possible, even though it decrees that they must be pursued without the goad of material need and even though its officials hope that they will not in fact be pursued. Political life, if it is to have any significance, must now be chosen for its own sake, and only now can be chosen for its own sake. I am going to assume that liberal ideologists' predictions of the "end of ideology" are wrong and that large numbers of people (not all people) are prone to make this choice. They demand or will demand some form of political participation, some share in political power. How shall their demand be met?

It might be met by the state itself. For there is no obvious reason why the officials of the welfare state, pressed by their constituents or by their own ambitions, should not move beyond the narrow limits of liberal utilitarianism. They will be, they are already, tempted to do so, for two not entirely consistent reasons: first, to avoid the great difficulties that will inevitably be encountered in the expansion of welfare production beyond its present limits; second, to avoid the boredom of success. In the long run, the second is the more important: while the building of the welfare state will have its exciting and morally significant moments, its administration will not. Its administrators will rarely feel themselves buoyed up and sustained by the zeal of their clients. The pride they may well take in the material

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services they render will never be elevated by the inner conviction of a higher purpose.

But beyond welfare there are many areas in which such purposes might be sought: education, culture, communications, mental health, city planning (and, most tempting and dangerous of all, though not within the range of this discussion, foreign policy). In all these areas the state can be active, in all of them political energies can be expended and emotional commitments made, in all of them common goods can be discovered, goods to be shared and not merely distributed.

Imagine, then, that the state moves into the field of "culture promotion." Won't the possibilities of cooperative choice and political self-determination be enhanced? Won't the citizens of such a state, the recipients not only of material but also of spiritual benefits, feel themselves to be members of a moral community, a world of rights and obligations?

Perhaps they will; our feelings are not always under our own control. Indeed, we know they will, for the modern state always intrudes, in greater or lesser degree, into areas that lie beyond welfare, most often in the name of political socialization. Obviously, it does so with considerable success. But all this has nothing to do with socialism or with a meaningful common life, for reasons which go to the very heart of the theory of citizenship and participation.

UNLIKE THE DEFENDERS OF the welfare state, theorists of citizenship have always been concerned with the problem of social scale. If human emotional and intellectual needs are to be partially fulfilled within political society, they have argued, then that society cannot be of any size or shape. It must be built on a human scale, accessible to our minds and feelings, responsive to our decisions.

Exactly what constitutes a human scale is and ought to be a subject of debate, but this is a debate likely to be carried on chiefly among radical democrats and socialists; it is not a debate in which liberal utilitarians take much interest. For it cannot be established that security and welfare are more efficiently administered to 2 million or 50 million or 200 million people. In fact, it is virtually certain that the quality of security and welfare need not change with the size of the population.

But this is probably not the case with regard to the fulfillment of nonmaterial desires. The quality and authenticity of emotional commitment, for example, does appear to vary with population size, though not absolutely or without reference to other factors: human emotions are more easily manipulated the wider their focus and the more they are cut away from immediate personal experience. Participation in cultural life probably varies the same way: the larger the audience, the more passive its members, the more stereotyped the products they consume. Once again, the formula is too pat but surely contains an element of truth, and its significance may plausibly be extended to politics as well.

The increasing size of the state, the growing power of administration, the decline of political life: all these turn politics from a concrete activity into what Marx once called the fantasy of everyday life. The state becomes an arena in which men do not act but watch the action, and, like other audiences, are acted upon. Patriotic communion is always a fraud when it is nothing more than the communion of an audience with its favorite actors, of passive subjects and heroes of the stage. Our emotions are merely tricked by parades and pageants, the rise and fall of political gladiators, the deaths of beloved chiefs, the somber or startling rites of a debased religion. It could be done to anyone, whereas patriotism ought to be the pride of a particular man, the enjoyment of particular activities.

When the modern state moves beyond welfare, it does not bring us the satisfactions of citizenship, but only vicarious participa-

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tion, the illusion of a common life. We find ourselves as if in a dream, living once again in a world which is morally dense and opaque, mystified by ideologies, dominated by leaders whose purposes are not obvious. We are oppressed in the name of a public interest, a national purpose, a solemn commitment, which is neither yours nor mine, nor ours, in any usual sense of those perfectly simple pronouns. It is difficult not to conclude, as the liberals do, that with the provision of individual material needs, the state reaches or ought to reach its limits. That is the end of its history, the culmination of its legitimacy. There is no state beyond the welfare state.

The struggle to control the modern state is a battle for the perfection of the welfare system. Any political leader who claims that it is more than this, who claims, for example, that citizens should do more for the state than the state does for them, is a dangerous man. He aims to avoid the problems of welfare production, or he seeks some sort of totalitarian "transcendence" (or he is preparing the nation for one or another kind of imperial adventure).

The fight over welfare is important enough. Given the most immediate desires of the poor themselves, given the sheer avariciousness of the rich and the powerful, the fight for some minimal standards of distributive justice takes on all the moral significance that has been attributed to it in the past century and a half. Nevertheless, it is not the only fight; nor ought the state to be the only focus of contemporary political struggle.

Even if the welfare state were to be perfected under the best possible conditions and under socialist auspices, the dangers of bureaucratic omnicompetence and popular passivity would not be avoided. Nor would a socialist government create a socialist society. That requires a different kind of politics, not the kind to which we are all so well accustomed, aimed permanently at the state, but a politics of immediate self-government, a politics of (relatively) small groups.

Socialist writers have never had a great deal that was new or interesting to say about the state. Despite vague phrases about its withering away, they seem to presuppose, as they probably must, an efficient and benevolent bureaucracy, hovering, so to speak, in the background, its central offices as far away as possible. The chief concern of the best left-wing theorists has always been with that day-to-day cooperation in productive activity which occupies the foreground of social life. That means, with those "life-giving nuclei," as Simone Weil called them, within which the local, immediate character of work and culture is determined.

Such secondary associations exist, or can exist, *within* the welfare state, but insofar as they are of some human value, they exist in permanent tension with the centralized administrative system necessary to welfare production. It is not the natural tendency even of liberal bureaucracy to encourage the formation of autonomous groups. This is so both because of the individualist bias of the welfare system and because of the perennial efforts of administrators to escape the system's utilitarian limits and meet the demand for meaningful citizenship in their own (fraudulent) fashion.

What socialism requires, then, is not that the welfare state be surpassed or transcended, whatever that would mean, but that it be held tightly to its own limits, drained of whatever superfluous moral content and unnecessary political power it has usurped, reduced so far as possible to a transparent administrative shell (overarching, protective, enabling) within which smaller groups can grow and prosper. The state is not going to wither away; it must be hollowed out.

WHAT SORTS OF GROUPS can fill the shell? Two are of especial interest here.

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FIRST, the great functional organizations, labor unions, professional associations, and so on: these are the crucial representative bodies of the present day. Their strength and inclusiveness is the best guarantee we can have of the benevolence of the welfare bureaucracy. Unorganized men are unrepresented and unprotected men, their claims unheard or but distantly heard at the centers of power. If they are benefited at all, they are subject to the most extreme paternalism.

The perfection of the welfare state will require the organization of all possible functional groups, even, or rather especially, the group of those who receive direct state assistance. In a society which still exploits masses of men, poverty itself is a function and no one so desperately requires representation as the man without an adequate income. But all these organizations, as I have argued, tend to become integrated into the welfare system: for them, success *is* integration. They are then trapped in more or less stable bargaining arrangements with governmental or corporate bureaucracies and forced to discipline their own members. They are, simultaneously, agents of distributive justice and social control. They are not and probably cannot be expected to become arenas of democratic decision-making (even though they will be the occasional focus of democratic revolts).

SECOND, all the local units of social life, work, education, and culture: cities and towns, factories, union locals, universities, churches, political clubs, neighborhood associations, theater groups, editorial boards, and so on. These might be conceived as overlapping circles of engagement and action, closed circles (though not closed in any coercive sense), whose members face inward at least some of the time, and within which resources are contained.

THESE are the most likely arenas of a genuinely democratic politics. The great danger of the perfected welfare state is that all or most of them would be broken open, so that resources leak away, independence is lost, and the members turn outward to face the powerful state, where all the action is, from which all good things come. To some extent this has already happened. But the process is by no means so far advanced as some of the more extreme versions of the theory of "mass society" suggest. Associations and neighborhoods continue to provide important social space for agitation and activity. Indeed, it needs to be said that the advance of the liberal state often transforms traditionalist communities (like the old churches) into new political arenas.

At the same time, however, the same process cuts individuals loose, isolates them from communal ties, drives them into a material and then an emotional dependency on the central authorities. It is in response to the expectant faces of these "liberated" individuals that state administrators proclaim the mysteries of national purpose and decide that they must pursue "excellence" or promote culture (or defend freedom), rewarding their eager, needful, and bored constituents with inflated rhetoric and byzantine artifacts, and all-too-often eliciting from them an irrational and unreflective patriotism.

Now all such pursuits and promotions lie outside the competence of the state; they belong to a different sphere of activity; they require a smaller scale of organization. To make these points and to make them stick is the major purpose of socialist politics in the welfare state. It amounts to saying that what we want *next*, and what we want to share, are the pleasures of power. This demand for local self-determination, since it is made in the face of a state whose power is unprecedented in human history, is sometimes called by the melodramatic but useful name "insurgency." [3]

[3] It is one of the odder features of political life that we characterize the common forms of oppression and domination with euphemisms and use words with the most violent connotations to describe modest acts of individual and popular self-assertion. In an article in DISSENT some five years

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Any member of the welfare state who is willful as well as desirous and who seeks some local space in which to act out his willfulness can be called an insurgent. He insists on his intentions as well as his needs. He seeks to close the circle (not every circle) against bureaucratic intrusions. He reargues the old democratic proposition that decisions should be made by those who are most affected by them. He calls into question the omnicompetence of the service state and of all the organizations created in its image.

In schools, factories, and neighborhoods, where social workers pursue their errands of decency, or union officials defend the interests of their members, or provosts and deans plan the educational experiences of the young, insurgency is likely to be a perennial phenomenon. It takes the form of wildcat strikes, welfare unions, student rebellions. Already a sense of professional *esprit* is growing up among those who know, or think they know, how to "handle" such outbursts. They believe that insurgency is a repudiation of services rendered, stupidly self-destructive since the services are so obviously helpful, even if they are often ineptly or impersonally delivered.

But insurgency is, or ought to be, very different from this. Its participants are not concerned that bureaucrats be sensitive and warm, but that they be reticent and limited, less imposing, less intrusive than they often are. Insurgency is a demand that bureaucratic services make possible, instead of replacing, local decision-making. Or rather, it is the acting out of a new dialectic, which denies conventional definitions of good behavior and seeks to make the "helpfulness" of the welfare bureaucracy into the starting point of a new politics of popular resistance and self-government.

IN THE LONG RUN, the issue for socialists is not state power,[4] but power *right here,* on this shop floor, in this university, in this city. And the central assumption of insurgent politics is that such power must always be won "from below"—which is also to say, against all the odds. For the triumph of benevolent bureaucrats in virtually every local society has been one of the results, not so much inevitable as overdetermined, of the entrance of masses of men into the political world. It is a function of integration.

Most of the previous forms of radical politics have involved demands for wider and wider systems of integration; every successful revolution has produced such a system. But insurgency is different from revolution (more limited, more immediate) precisely in that it seeks no more extensive unity, but calls instead for the multiplication of diverse and independent unities. And it begins this process with a modest but urgent demand for a share *right now* in the management of *this* community.

Whether this can actually be won and the victory sustained is another matter. It is not difficult to imagine a kind of permanent insurgency, generating marginal but never major disturbances in the welfare state, always asserting its claims, never able to enforce them, capable of staging riots, never capable of building a movement or a new community. Newspapers provide us daily with intimations of such a pattern. We don't know if local organizations of rebellious citizens can displace entrenched officials, sanctioned and supported by the central state; nor do we know if they can win any substantial allegiance from their own members, establish some more or less effective control over the

ago, I used the term "resistance" to suggest the sorts of activities presently called insurgency by various New Left writers. Their word will do as well, though they are no more guerrilla fighters than I am.

[4] Nor is it corporate power: the problem of counterbalancing, regulating, or destroying the power of private corporations is primarily a welfare problem; it concerns the most immediate interests of workers and consumers. But its solution would not necessarily even raise the question of democratic decision-making.

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local politics of work and culture, and generate significant cooperative activity. Above all, we don't know if they can create new patterns of democratic responsibility, so that the militants of this or that rebellion don't simply become a new elite. That success is possible must be the socialist's faith, or better, the wager that sustains his commitment.

The politics of insurgency and the politics of welfare obviously overlap, both in time and technique, and their different purposes are sometimes confused. Insurgency has been a prominent feature of every struggle for recognition: the sit-in strikes of the 1930s are the classic example. Oppressed groups must always win enough power either to threaten those who refuse to grant their demands or to threaten the general peace and so compel state intervention on their behalf. And "enough" power always means power in some particular place, sufficient to inflict some particular injury.

But so long as the goal of the oppressed is (as it ought to be) membership in the greater society rather than autonomy for the smaller one, such power is largely a means to an end, and it disappears when it ceases to be a necessary means. It gradually seeped away from local unions, for example, once bargaining rights were granted at the national or industrywide level—and while this was certainly a democratic loss, it must be admitted that what the workers wanted could only have been won at the national level.

Something like this will probably happen in the civil rights movement also, since the problems of the Negro community can not be solved until its activists transform such local power as they may win into national recognition and full admission into the welfare state. And this suggests a lesson which is not easy to learn: that political power must always be twice-won. It must be won first with the help of the state or through the creation of parallel bureaucracies against established local or corporate elites. Then it must be won again by new popular forces against the state. In the U.S. today, the Negro is still fighting the first battle; Americans who have already won national recognition are, let us hope, ready for the second.

Socialism, it has often been said, requires decentralization. But that is not quite accurate, for it implies a process that begins at the center and is, just for that reason, inherently unlikely. It suggests that socialism awaits the triumph of a national movement whose leaders are ready to sponsor the fragmentation and dispersion of the power they have so recently won. Once installed, however, won't they be driven to realize how much good might be done with their power if only it is kept intact . . . for a few years more? (And they may well be right.) We ought, of course, to insist that state officials do as much as they can to encourage the growth of secondary associations independent of themselves, not forming wheels within wheels of their welfare-producing machine. But the vitality of such associations depends finally on those who associate.

Socialism then requires insurgency, that is, self-government within the welfare state and against it whenever necessary. And it is the great paradox of socialist politics that the state toward which we must always remain tense, watchful, and resistant is or will almost certainly become the most legitimate, rationally purposive and powerful state that has ever existed. □

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Jesse R. Pitts

The Hippies as Contrameritocracy

Hippies seem to fascinate the mass media somewhat less than they did a year or two ago. But they have not disappeared. Older Hippies, who refused to convert to straight society, have moved from Haight Ashbury to Big Sur or other places more removed from the tourist trade. Communes have sprung up in rural or urban settings, and Hippies are less noticeable now that some of their fashions have become part of youth culture. Some say that Hippies have become Yippies: they have renounced nonviolence and political indifference in favor of active provocation and resistance. Others say the Yippies are an invention of the mass media. The "mother-fucker" wing of SDS seems to consist of hipster-type Hippies attracted by the pornography of violence.

But regardless of the vagaries of fashion that permit successive cohorts of youth to differentiate themselves from one another, the Hippie phenomenon seems here to stay, not merely as a variety of the perennial bohemian fringe well described some years ago by Ned Polsky in this magazine,[1] but as a social movement of some significance.

It is likely that Hippies, ostentatiously doing their thing even in Traverse City, Michigan, are an intrinsic part of the postindustrial world. My hypothesis is that there is developing in the United States (and probably in other industrialized countries of the West) a *contrameritocracy,* which offers the failures or dropouts of the achievement society a haven that neutralizes the pains of failure. Until now this antiachievement society was located either at the very top or bottom. At the upper-class level we had "café society," at the bottom disorganized working-class elements and hoboes. (The underworld, by contrast, has an achievement orientation.) By its nature, the upper class cannot endorse the achievement criteria of the middle class. It must shift the grounds of status from occupational achievement to family-rooted superiorities: ancientness of dynasty, graceful living, and a commitment to *noblesse oblige.* Style is more important than the consequences of action. The upper class also supports the more high-brow forms of art; for this appreciation seems to require special gifts not available to conventional middle-class patrons. In its struggle against the middle class it is often led to disparage the values of hard work, thrift, and personal restraint in favor of an ethic of prowess flowing from inherent traits of personality ("breeding"). The "Jet Set" is the militant expression of the antiachievement aspect of the upper-class ethos.

In the past few years, however, the Jet Set has become more and more a transmission belt into some sections of the middle class for fashions, mannerisms, and ideology orginating mainly in the Hippie movement. This is because the Hippie movement has become the effective center of the contrameritocracy in the United States and probably also in England, though in Japan, Germany, Italy, and France, New Left patterns have been more

[1] "The Village Beat Scene: Summer 1960," by Ned Polsky, DISSENT, Summer 1961.

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important. The New Left copes with the threat of failure by asserting that opportunity for achievement does not really exist, since it is monopolized by a nation's power elite. The Hippie movement claims that the opportunities offered by the meritocracy must not be pursued if man is to save his soul. It has become the effective center of the contrameritocracy, because its values and behavior patterns permit a thorough and enthusiastic alienation, and because its critique, whatever its "scientific" value, offers a disturbing challenge to society.

It is my contention that the Hippie movement is made up of youths who are overcommitted to the basic middle-class values but are unwilling to realize those values in the occupational world. Since their attachment to middle-class values makes them unwilling to enter the world of juvenile delinquency, there remain for them the patterns of heroic value commitment and expressive behavior, through which they align their stand with that of the upper class—but without the latter's devotion to graceful living and essential conservatism. The Hippie movement is a religious sect through which the members reach what they feel to be the highest levels of value achievement, and thus they attempt to bring salvation to the corrupt society that rejects them. The use of the adjective "religious" is justified by the constant reference in the Hippie movement to nonrational, nonempirical forces, its concern with the ultimate ends and meanings of life, and its relative immunity to organizational failure. To describe the Hippie movement as "religious" is also warranted by the fact that members of the movement are willing to give its basic values primacy in guiding their personal development, regardless of loss or disapproval.

Hippies give absolute allegiance to two values: universal love and the unique value of the individual. Of the Christian religions, Eastern Orthodox Catholicism is the most collectively oriented and Puritanism the most individualistic.

The Hippie movement, I would suggest, represents a further emphasis on this individualism. For the Puritan ethos the value of the individual in his uniqueness lies in his imitation of Christ, his struggle to act continuously in such a way as to be consistent with the search for the City of Light; but this struggle is hampered, of course, by inner temptations representing the weight of the flesh. In the Puritan ethos there is one strain implying that actions of the elect have an inherent goodness; and then, in its liberal version this becomes the belief that all men are intrinsically good and that with effort, learning, and self-control anyone can succeed in "realizing himself." But whether fundamentalist or liberal, the Puritan ethos is suspicious of pleasure and holds that the direction of the good lies away from gratification of the flesh. The uniqueness of the individual resides in the unpredictable diversity of his struggles with the world and the flesh. An act, to be good, must be a personal effort rather than represent compliance with church and state. While "nobody can tell you what to do" in any particular situation, the direction is nevertheless clear and common to all men: they must build the City of God on earth.

Though it has roots in the Puritan ethos, the Hippie conception of uniqueness is different. For the Hippie all men are good if only they give way to their nature, as against the pressures of the social structure. Hence, uniqueness will be found in the cultivation of sincerity and spontaneity. Since all individuals are equally valuable and worthy of love, the desires of each merit realization. Nor is there suspicion of pleasure as a guide to action, and of sensual pleasure in particular. But sensual pleasure is seen not so much in its hedonistic light (there is some of this, no doubt) but as a sign of what the individual needs, and a guarantee against domination by others. One must always do what one wants to do; anything else is subordination

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and loss of independence, *ergo* loss of individuality. Self-expression should know only one limit dictated by the love of others: the other's need for his own self-expression.

The high valuation of love is in line with all the major religions. In the Hippie movement this is not to remain an abstract dedication to others but must become a warm openness toward all human beings that precludes competitiveness at any level. In the Western world, at least, men are supposed to love their families and be receptive to outsiders, but they are also supposed to be able to enter into limited relations that are dominated by objectively measured exchanges. Outside the family and friendship, direct expression of the value of love is limited to a willingness to cooperate on the neighborhood or job level, or to a general respect for the rules of the game even if cheating would bring immediate returns. But the Hippie commitment to love goes beyond all this: it implies a permanent willingness to share all of one's possessions with anyone who might require them. It also implies a refusal to judge anyone or to give a person a label like thief, convict, addict, because the code of love requires that the individual always be given another chance—and without expecting anything in return. In fact, love is seen by the Hippies as the normal expression of man unless he is hampered and perverted by social structure: the meritocratic rat race destroys love. The Hippie community, which assembles those who dedicate themselves to the value of love, takes on a special sanctity, for it demonstrates the possibility of creating groups where men can be together without conformity, discrimination, or jealousy. Within the group all resources are shared and a good deal of time is spent in the sheer enjoyment of each other's company.

The value of the individual and the value of love find their first combined specifications in the cult of sincerity, the cult of independence, and the imperative of "keeping your cool." The valuation of sincerity is definitely in line with the Puritan ethos, not just in the "I cannot tell a lie" sense but, more important, as part of the search for inner consistency—since every action must reflect the election of the soul. Embracing this value with a vengeance, Hippies turn it against the adult world; they describe the relations between adults—with their mental reservations, their limited commitments, their unwillingness to raise issues irrelevant to an immediate problem—as "playing games."

Love is to be shared with all mankind, by contrast with the narrow capacities of the adults who are usually limited to family, friends, ethnic, and national similars. The Hippies want all relationships to be total or at least potentially total. No role differentiation for them: merely human beings, face-to-face, intent on love rather than on manipulating each other for selfish ends.

Another specification in line with the American ethos is the Hippies' high valuation of independence. A man and a woman should be financially and emotionally independent from any other man or woman. This does not preclude developing attachments to particular individuals, but those attachments must involve complete reciprocity and never act as binding obligations upon the other. In order to be valid, a relationship must be totally spontaneous and sincere (there is a tendency to see these two kinds of behavior as synonymous). In the optic of universal love, whether one has a special attachment to someone else is not crucial. What replaces love between man and woman is not hatred or indifference, but simply universal love. If anything, romantic love is under some suspicion, for it tends to withdraw people from the magic circle of universal love. One should not be "hung up" on anything or anybody, one should "keep his cool."

The imperative of "keeping your cool" is strangely in line with the Puritan norm of self-control, although it is certainly not the English version of self-control with its inhibition of aggression and sexual expression. More than a restraint upon self-expres-

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sion, it is a warning that one should be able to disconnect any relationship that turns out to be upsetting. One should never be so "hung up" on anything, or on any single relationship, that one is led to lose one's temper or feel inordinate grief; one should not allow anyone to possess another human being. Thus, the world can never threaten the Hippie effectively. Is not this antagonism to the "ties of the flesh" very similar to the attitude of the Puritan divines in the 17th century?

Another meaning of "cool" is awareness. The Hippie must never be "taken in" by society, but he must at all times keep his distance from the role relationships he may be compelled to enter. "To be cool" is to dominate through intelligence and analysis any potentially distasteful involvement in the world. In Puritanism potential conflicts between high valuation of the individual and high valuation of universal love are limited by the doctrine of original sin, which states that in and of himself the individual cannot reach perfection: he needs the aid of grace which permits him access to a perfection whose model is outside the individual. Through denial of the self-directed impulse the individual demonstrates his state of grace, and the universal principles of morality (the Kantian categorical imperative) provide the rationale of self-restraint. Service combines inner direction and integration into the community, without undergoing the disruptive potentials of both the economic entrepreneur and the moral entrepreneur à la Thoreau.

Having abandoned the concept of original sin, the Hippies deny the relevance of any universal standard of morality. A person must do his own thing: only thus can he realize the good within him. Caught between what the sociologist must see as the conflicts inherent in a doctrine that stresses values impossible to maximize simultaneously (the cult of personal experience or independence and the cult of community, the cult of spontaneity and the high valuation on keeping cool), there is a tendency among Hippies toward a split in values: some choose an individualistic and hedonistic pattern, which Norman Mailer described as the "hipster" life, and others a mystic pattern that strives to deny ego needs or fuses them into the needs of the group. The latter part of the Hippie movement has been attracted by Eastern philosophies, mainly Hindu or Taoist, for they structure a system of thought in which intuition, vision, telepathy, and modulated emotion are preferred ways to the truth. These philosophies hold out the promise that man may rinse the soul of ego in the narrower and greedy sense of the term.

The resolution of these contradictions, and the cohabitation of both the hipster and the mystic in the same communities, will be easier if spontaneous and sincere action stays away from places where facilities are scarce and where the pleasure of one may lessen the opportunities of the other. It will also be easier if one avoids complex forms of cooperative action where the pay-off is long in coming and where those who possess the highest technical skills must make sure they have the cooperation of the less skillful. Luckily, the most valued activity is the creative expression of inner moods through various art forms, or simply and more frequently, through the spontaneity of the "scene." And here the Hippies part from the Puritan ethos with its emphasis on active mastery of the environment. We have instead a primacy of expressive activities, which is reflected in the Hippies' devotion to culture, especially to culture of an avant-garde type. In painting their tastes go from the most advanced abstractionists to op and pop art. In writing there are a series of seers such as Kerouac (less liked now that he has become too establishment-oriented), Allen Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, Herman Hesse, Corso, Burroughs, Ken Kesey, Selby, Tolkien, Kahlil Gibran. All poetry either far-out in style or sexual in content will be appreciated or given the benefit of the doubt. Poetry is preferred to novels because it is less

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rational in construction, more spontaneous, and apparently does not take as long to write. Many Hippies, when asked what they do, will answer "I write"; they usually mean poetry. A function of this cult of culture is to upgrade the self-imputed status of the Hippie. Not only is he superior to all members of society who do not share his interest, but he is also superior to those who do not give to this interest the same dedication.

Yet the cult of culture requires less effort than might be thought. In many ways Hippies have a relation to high-brow culture similar to that of upper-class people. They know the writers and the artists, or know someone who claims to know them. There is a set vocabulary to assimilate and use at proper moments. There are taste leaders who give the proper cues as to what should be admired. Above all, Hippies see themselves as creators in their own right, even if the only object of their creation is their own mood when under the influence of drugs.

Any group whose ideas deviate significantly from the surrounding community has the problem of maintaining solidarity among members whose reason for belonging lies precisely in their social maladjustment. The cohesion and continuity of the group will be furthered if it develops a high ethnocentrism and reduces its relationships to the outside world as much as possible to martyrdom and proselytism.

The high ethnocentrism in the Hippie community leads to two consequences. The first is its justification of an exploitative relation to the outside world. Sponging on welfare and petty thievery in record shops, bookstores, university libraries, and supermarkets are accepted because, supposedly, there is a state of war between the square (or "straight") world and the Hippies, a war that is the sole responsibility of the former. Friendly patrons can be used without any commitment on the Hippie's part, since fundamentally they are still the enemy and, after all, they are repaid by the pleasure derived from giving. Merely by belonging to the group, the Hippie gets a feeling of being one of the chosen few. This encourages a feeling of mutual dependence, the fraternity of the trenches. Tolerance is justified because the failings of the chosen are minor in comparison with the importance of being among the chosen.

Two ideological tenets reinforce this ethnocentrism. One is "catastrophism," the belief that the world is soon to be obliterated because squares in their ignorance, folly, and meanness are bound to unleash atomic war, thereby making nonsense of middle-class planning and postponement of gratification. The second belief is "miserabilism" or "pastoralism," which states that the more outside the system an individual is, the less likely is his native goodness to be corrupted. And since the Hippie identifies with the Noble Savage, he can worship his own group without having to bear the burden of the sin of pride. Examples of the Noble Savage are the Negro, the itinerant worker, and, more recently, the American Indian.

The tense relationship between the outside world and the Hippie community is maintained by "blowing people's minds," the use of drugs, and work avoidance. "Blowing people's minds" is the obverse of "keeping your cool": its purpose is to shock, disconcert, and thus help disintegrate the "unhealthy" psychological structures of outsiders.

This behavior, always permissible against squares, is supposed to force people to face the futility of their present course of action and make them accept the new wisdom incarnated in the act that "blew their mind." The capacity to blow people's minds has been the only approved way to express aggression,[2] because in its essence it is sup-

[2] The past tense seems indicated here because there seems to have been a shift away from nonviolence, e.g., the recent Chicago (August 1968) slogan "Kill the Pigs" (the police). It is difficult to determine, however, whether this was a slogan

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posed to be an act of love. Retelling of occasions where "blowing someone's mind" was done successfully against squares is one of the ways prestige is built. And "blowing people's minds" has the advantage of shying clear of police reprisal: it may shock, it may be an act of exquisite cruelty, but it is unlikely to be a legal misdemeanor.

Squares have their minds blown when Hippies offer the spectacle of their decorative spontaneity, in their clothing, hair styles, profanity, public love-making or undressing, gifts of flowers to policemen, sleeping in the streets, in the frenzy and bawdiness of their music, integrated love-making, and self-righteous begging. The "love-in" becomes a sort of Hippie revival meeting. Blowing people's minds is the way to proselytize the world; but it is not an attempt to influence through dialectic, for the choice of the true way must remain one's own. To influence someone is to restrict his freedom.

Releasing the primacy of expressive activities need not result in the kind of achievement valued by squares: the drug cult is proof that one can gain pleasure without having to pay the price of work and self-denial and that the road to happiness is not through competition. When one has some marijuana one shares it with others, and when they have some they reciprocate.

It is the secret weed around which rituals of solidarity and mutual love are organized, for Hippies believe that taking drugs together can lead people to mystical kinds of experiences that may link them forever, even if they should never again see each other. Drugs prove that the inner state (pleasure, revelation) is the important goal, rather than trying to modify the outside world.

A frequent belief among Hippies is that we do not normally use more than 10 percent of our brain power, and that drugs, especially of the LSD variety, permit the expansion of one's consciousness by going beyond the structures of thought derived from role-playing and "status games." Thus drug takers are privy to a wisdom that is beyond the grasp of any square, however learned he may be.[3]

Drugs play a major role in cementing the solidarity of the Hippie community. For new members the use of drugs becomes a rite of passage, a way of teaching proper techniques of appreciation. It also serves as a sign of mutual recognition among Hippies and a way to maintain the hostility of the square community.

Avoidance of work is equally crucial to the integration of the Hippie community. As the opposite of spontaneity, work is a constraint upon one's fulfillment because it subverts the individual in his uniqueness. Hippies reject the alienation of work because it always requires some and often much self-denial.

Hippies also reject the commitment to exchange that is implicit in work. While the classical Puritan ethos sees in work the idea of service, for the Hippies the impersonality of the market to which work is oriented either directly or implicity condemns work as a force separating individuals from one another.

The worst form of work is, of course, that which is most common in the modern world, work in the bureaucratic context, which is said to heighten impersonality and subordination and to remove people from nature. The Hippie might try his hand at some craft which puts him into intimate relation with wood, stone, plants—but not with IBM cards and paper clips. To paint, carve, write, or play music is not to work but, on

pushed mainly by the SDS, Maoists, and Trotskyites, and to what extent it was taken up by the new Yippies, the old-style Hippies, and the "straight" McCarthy youth. Furthermore, the slogan seems often part of the pornography of violence rather than an effective commitment. The police, unfortunately, do not always seem aware of the difference.

[3] It is conceivable that drugs may not be necessary anymore, say some of the older Hippies. They were a shortcut, a way of discovering where "it was at," but the true sage should be able to gain peace and wisdom without them.

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the contrary, to do what one wants, regardless of whether others like the product.

Beatniks of the type described by Polsky in 1961 went to great extremes to avoid work, but Hippies will occasionally work at some semiskilled jobs. Men may do house painting and decorating, janitoring, cab driving, bartending, and mail delivery. Girls will do waitressing,[4] Kelly girling, thesis typing, modeling, or clerking.

The Hippie movement serves to mitigate the impact of deviance from the total society. Although the group is economically parasitic upon the society, it discourages among its members gross stealing and swindling. It is uncool to steal from persons, though alright to steal from supermarkets that overcharge the poor.

While there are many deviant behavior patterns Hippies will tolerate, they definitely do not encourage "hard drug" addiction. Even "pot heads" (people who smoke marijuana so as to be "high" through most of the day) and "speed freaks" (amphetamine addicts) will find a subtle pressure to limit their drug intake to group occasions. Although Hippies have no Kantian principles of sexual morality, they consider rather "uncool" seduction, satyriasis, pedophilia, rape. There is even some muted social pressure against homosexuality as a dominant sexual adjustment. Indeed, all the evidence points to a relatively low rate of sexual activity, considering the lack of moral censure and the ready opportunities; the levels are certainly well below those entertained by "square" fantasies. There are known cases of beautiful girls having lived many months in Hippie communities and remaining virgins. And Hippie girls will not prostitute themselves (turn themselves into an object), even though this is often an easy source of funds and need not assume the sordid trappings of "hustling."

At least until 1967 it was considered quite uncool to provoke the wrath of the police. The taboo against aggression insures that whatever provocation takes place will be verbal, indirect, and not likely to start the night sticks swinging. Except for the possession of drugs, the Hippie will seldom engage in obvious violations of the law. He is more likely to specialize in nondelictual delinquency which thrills the doer, shocks the onlooker if he's around, but rarely triggers the apparatus of justice. Dealing in marijuana and LSD is usually the worst felony committed, and the result is a very low arrest and conviction rate. Hence the delinquencies the Hippie community allows and/or fosters are unlikely to make a return to middle-class society difficult.

The educative impact of the Hippie community has two aspects: first, just by being a member, the Hippie experiences a relief from the self-deprecation that often has characterized these individuals before they joined the movement.

The refusal of career commitments becomes a conformity to the antiwork ideology. Failure becomes a mark of purity—paranoia the assumed reality of police harassment, passivity kindness. Depersonalization and twilight states can be explained by the use of drugs. Impotence and nymphomania can be seen as expressions of sexual freedom. Homosexual trends can be talked out and even occasionally acted out in festive group occasions without shame and panic.[5]

The tolerance and lack of aggressiveness of the Hippies serve as tranquilizers for many personalities suspicious or anxiety-ridden in their interpersonal relations. The "saints" of the movement often do have a self-confident and benign quality that facilitates their rapport with an "uptight" neophyte. The im-

[4] In bohemian bars and coffee shops, this may even have some prestige because it transforms the waitress into a priestess of the Rhythm and Blues cult.

[5] This is often the latent function or at least the unexpected consequence of the "orgy."

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portance of the group as a shelter, a source of nurturance, and a solvent of guilt facilitates a strong transference for a personality that has gained new self-esteem.

The Hippie collective offers the neophyte the possibility of increasing his rate of interaction with others—and at his own speed. "Keeping your cool" promotes a degree of self-control in personalities where this capacity has often been lacking. A legitimated self learns dissent without fearing exclusion. And then, like the child who discovers his parents are not perfect, the Hippie discovers the discrepancy between the values of the group and the limits of its organization.[6] For eventually he comes to realize that there are freaks and scoundrels as well as saints among the chosen, and that the difference from the square world is perhaps not so great as he first thought. A lasting heterosexual commitment; the subsequent realization that if one wants a good job, it is necessary to complete one's education and/or accept certain bureaucratic disciplines; a growing realization that one is not so young anymore and that the millennium is not for tomorrow—all these can then lead the Hippie to "sell out" and rejoin the meritocracy.

Thus in the social reconversion of the Hippie his group experience will have been useful, and its cultivation of high-brow culture will have helped him maintain a familiarity with the academic atmosphere that is handy when he reenlists in college. Sponsors on the fringe of the movement can often help him obtain a job in the mass communication industries, from managing record shops to writing advertising copy.

Evidence on the postgraduate lives of Hippies is not easy to assemble. In 1967 a list was made of 67 Hippies who used to come to the Ibiza-Formentera islands every summer or lived there all year around but had not shown up that summer. They had been described by informants as hard-core Hippies, whose period of activity in the movement ranged from one to four years. These Hippies were mostly American and British. Out of 25 women, one was dead, nine had married within the group, and another was living with a French sculptor. All but one of the husbands held relatively steady middle-class jobs. Of the 15 girls not known to be married, only six were involved in the type of employment that might permit the continuation of Hippie life: three were photographers' models, two were nightclub dancers, and one was a translator in Ibiza. Of the 42 men, one was dead, and only six could be said to be still pursuing the Hippie life. This does not mean that the teachers, the manager-owners of the macrobiotic restaurant, the published novelist, the American who had become an interior decorator in Germany, the nightclub manager in New York, have become entirely "straight." Some of these "reconverted" 35 have joined "swinging bohemia" and others "proper bohemia." What is crucial here is the assumption of a full-time job, i.e., coming to terms with the dominant society in ways other than sponging or part-time low-skill employment. Nor will the return to the community necessarily mean a simple conformity. There is more likely to be a marginal adjustment, and a potential relapse.

Over the last few years there has been a considerable increase in college enrollment in the Western world and especially in the U.S., drawn mainly from the lower-middle or working class. Once enrolled in college, these students benefit from a status that is already higher than that of their parents. Yet a good number will not be able to maintain themselves in college and will have to settle for occupations involving a return to the status of their parents. Even a student from a

[6] One of the major problems of the Hippie movement, as of all religious sects, is that success means wider membership, division of labor, hierarchy, all of which make much more difficult the undifferentiated and immediately felt fraternity of the "tribe." There is a tendency for communities to explode and fragment when they reach a certain size.

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middle-middle-class home who has entered a prestige Ivy League university will be exposed to this possibility. And since lower-middle- and even middle-middle-class families do not have the means to cushion the downward mobility of their children, achievement anxiety is likely to be common among students from these two groups.

Only rarely will a student who has been able to enter college or graduate school fail because of lack of I.Q. He is much more likely to fail because of an incapacity to efficiently mobilize for the completion of tasks. College and graduate education require a capacity to work without direct supervision and to bear professional authority without fawning or rebellion, and perhaps most of all an ego strong enough to withstand the judgment of competent specialists. Given the crucial nature of the university degrees as passports to middle-middle- and upper-middle-class positions, and the broad equality of opportunity that exists in the university, the adolescent faces the possibility of a failure that could seem the failure of his whole personality. The better the university, the more talented and understanding the teaching staff and the psychological services, the more difficult it is to find excuses for one's failures. There is no place to hide.

Most students who drop out manage to reduce their level of aspiration without excessive bitterness. But those students who come from families with a strong desire for upward mobility—and whose status is threatened by discrepancies in income, occupation, style of life, and ethnic origin—are likely to experience a more difficult problem of identity. They are not as likely to find in their parents the models they need to balance their aspirations and their effective potential. The pressures of the meritocracy find a weaker ego structure, a greater fear of judgment, a greater anxiety as to what the future may contain. If the students come from nonreligious, unitarian, "liberal," or radical homes, the response is likely to take the form of a New Left or Hippie commitment. And indeed, it is among the latter that we should find the bulk of the militants of the contrameritocracy.

Since those who choose the Hippie mode of adjustment as a *dominant* behavior pattern will represent no more than 1 percent of the student body, it is necessary to inquire why so small a movement has had such an impact upon the youth society and why it has become the *dominant* mode of bohemia.

Some of the impact upon youth can be explained by factors common to other movements: the chance to be taken seriously, to live dangerously (it takes "heart" to live the Hippie way), and the denial of competitive achievement.

The themes of love and total acceptance of the whole personality give legitimacy to the prolongation of a teen-age kind of gang that is immune to the centrifugal forces of heterosexual commitments and differential school and occupational achievements. Thus, while the Hippies attempt a "primarization of life" as their response to the increasing pressures of the meritocracy, they shift the grounds of achievement from areas where it is scarce and competitive to areas of the inner self where everybody can win.

Security and nurturance are offered without the member having to pay the price of conformity. Here is an opportunity for American youth to experience a peer group with which he is likely to have had little or no contact: a peer group where solidarity is untrammeled by any achievement criteria like sports, sexual prowess, fad leadership, etc. Other "exclusives" of the Hippie movement are the heavy public exposure through the popularity of the Rock band and of young bards like the Beatles, Bob Dylan, Donovan, Joan Baez, Jimi Hendrix. Their music and songs are a self-righteous exaltation of love and animal spirits against the dull requirements of social structure. The Hippie cult of spontaneity and independence strikes a responsive chord among adolescents

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struggling to establish their identity amid the pressures of school and family.

While Rock bands and bards sing the joy of having one's "mojo" working, the attitude of the Hippies toward sex succeeds in removing some, if not much, of the confusion and anxiety attending sexuality among adolescents. And just as Puritanism began the movement toward a single sex standard (men abstaining as well as women), so the Hippies continue it (women enjoying sex as freely as men). The result is the same: a step toward effective equality between men and women. But the content of premarital sex—for this is the type of sex they are really concerned about—has been transformed. Sex has been demythified or desacralized. Hippies distinguish between "fucking" which is sheer sensual enjoyment,[7] without any commitment, and "making love," where there is some commitment even if it does not result in a lasting relationship. Hippie girls seem usually to prefer "making love," yet they can also indulge in the more detached type of sexual intercourse without feeling shame. Sex must be free, i.e., a woman must fully want it rather than merely bear it, consent to it, be seduced, or forced into it. To that extent even "fucking" is spiritualized, an act of the total self. Contrary to public fantasies, the result of Hippie social pressure (not altogether intended) is not some loose promiscuity but rather stable relationships, which are entered into on the basis of psychological compatibility without any fog of sexual deprivation and obsession.

For many boys the end of the "seduction imperative" must indeed be a relief, but the main beneficiaries of the Hippie sexual patterns are the women. The Hippies at once upgrade the classical "female" values of love, nurturance, expressiveness, while also offering girls more opportunities for rejecting the traditional female role.

[7] The evidence collected so far does not seem to point to special success in attaining high levels of sexual enjoyment.

Hippie life seems to resolve some of the strains that women experience in a period of changing sex roles: at once encouraged to be active and self-reliant in studies, job hunting, and choice of lover(s)—yet expected to be passive, attractive, and loyal to men even at the cost of some personal satisfaction. The Hippie woman *seems* to secure sexual satisfaction without shame, and to be free without loneliness. She can express "masculine trends" without fear of male rejection. Since it is easier for girls to find jobs in the square world—employers being easier on the females of pariah groups —many a Hippie girl winds up as the breadwinner of the couple. Having set out to be an amazon she discovers she has become another Jewish mother.

Hence the Hippie movement is a preferred mode of deviance for girls, and their ratio in the Hippie community (two or three boys for every girl) is much higher than in other patterns of deviance such as alcoholism, hard-drug addiction, suicide, professional crime, or juvenile delinquency.

The most telling appeal of the Hippie movement is that it can relieve the pain of failure in the occupational world. Through drug experiences, for example, it has created a new respect among its members for the nonrational and nonempirical aspects of human experience that challenge the value of occupational achievement and emphasize how much man deludes himself in thinking he can control his "social" destiny. Astrology, numerology, the whole folklore of good and bad "vibrations" are further instances of nonrational and nonempirical phenomena to which Hippies give credence. An air-tight system of beliefs thereby transforms the losers, the dispossessed, the subordinates, and the judged into a blessed group. Although in bureaucratic, capitalistic, warmongering Babylon they seem to be chained, they are superior to their captors and no prison can hold their souls. The first are really the last and the last the first, because they will not sell their birthright for the

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pottage of success. The Hippie belief system does not, like the radical political movements, have to suffer the consequences of the failures of ideology in Soviet Russia, China, or Cuba. It does not even have to achieve any concrete political goal, because on its own terms organizational success or failure means nothing.

One of the weaknesses of the American New Left is its youth orientation: every year brings its devotees closer to the fatal age of thirty. But the Hippies are on firmer ground for they deny the relevance of age, just as they deny the relevance of sex and status categories. And by declaring age irrelevant, they not only declare irrelevant the disabilities the square world attaches to age; they also offer their members eternal youth. Youth is transformed into a motivational category: the elect have it forever.

With all their potential appeal the Hippies have influenced so far only a small fraction of the Youth Society. Most lower-middle- and middle-middle-class youths have satisfactory family relations and have made sex-role identifications which permit integration into occupational, marital, and community roles, and have ambitions that are within reach of their intellect and will power. Nevertheless, meritocratic pressures keep bearing down harder on the Youth Society and may make it vulnerable to the Hippie appeal if alternative structures do not appear.

Hippie styles have radiated upward to older bohemia as it receives the mature failures and the temporary failures. The latter come to visit more than to stay. Their anger against the world that has passed them by, or friends who went on to better things, dissipates progressively as they learn the meaninglessness of what the squares call success. A whole world of freedom and new pleasures seems within easy reach. Although older bohemians tend to be sarcastic about Hippies (as the latter tend to be toward teenie-boppers, i.e., Hippies of high school age), they still feel obliged to defend them against the squares. Defending the Hippies is like the Hippies defending the Negroes, a way of validating one's group without seeming to.

The crucial appeal of the Hippies for older bohemia is that they offer the chance of renewed youth, a still open future. Hippies will relate to people whose age varies from 14 to 80, and bohemia will relate to the older Hippies (20 to 25).

Bohemia is, of course, an institution that antedates the Hippie movement by more than a century. Some of the Hippie themes, as Bennett Berger has pointed out, are as old as bohemia. What the Hippies have brought to bohemia is a mass base for the development of the underground press, a new militancy, an increase in self-righteousness, a relief from the ghetto feeling. The stress on high culture and the occasional interchange with the Jet Set permit condescension toward the middle-class meritocracy. Even if average in the occupational world, the bohemian is always culturally superior to the readers of the Time-Life art section.

Through mass media channels and the numerous shops that have sprung up in suburbia and around campuses, the Hippie movement has been providing a series of statements and attitudes, a style the young striver—at least in the professional, mass media, and intellectual trades (i.e., frequently high-ambition and high-uncertainty trades)—can use as an *insurance policy against failure*. The heightening of meritocratic pressures leads to an increased need for a center that can reduce the tensions induced by frustrations while nevertheless keeping the individual from quitting. The Judeo-Christian churches used to provide this center for strivers and failures of all classes. Essentially, they were able to proclaim the salvation of those who had the proper motivation regardless of their success or lack of it in this vale of tears and thereby to reduce human failure to insignificance in the eyes of God.

It is largely in this sense that the Hippie

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movement—with a mystique that places its basic dogmas outside the realm of rational discourse—can be termed a religious movement. It offers a way to *supreme success,* i.e., sincere, spontaneous, loving self-expression, doing what you want to do, if only you give up the games of bureaucratic existence.

Like all churches, the Hippie movement has a small core of devotees and theologians, its phonies, and its saints, and a large mass of vacation, weekend, and Sunday members who return on Monday to the uncharitable competitive world of the job or graduate school. The Hippie commitment expresses itself through a nonactivist support for pacifism, the underdog, the rebellious youth; a style of life that dismisses as many of the conspicuous aspects of status as is possible; a pattern of speech that allows for the maximum amount of self-revelation and the maximum amount of support for others (we are all sinners and love children together); a preference for direct confrontation rather than manipulation; a permissive attitude toward sex of which their somewhat overweight wives do not seem to take notice or advantage; an attitude toward work that at once runs it down yet tries to make of it as much as possible a personal experience; a willingness to change career lines once one feels that there is little to be learned or created; a liking for the novel, the disconcerting, the far-out; a preference for marijuana and LSD as tranquilizers or as a recreation, and for interactive adventure rather than getting things done; a tendency to transform the friendship network into a sort of Jewish family; in short an aesthetic and sentimental attitude toward life.

It is at least conceivable that the Hippie movement represents a groping toward a necessary adjustment of our social structure to the growing rationalization and "disenchantment" of life on the one hand and, on the other, to the decline in the *quality* of community experience that one can secure outside one's immediate family. So far, all the evidence points to the fact that the meritocracy, far from making life easier for the highly educated, increases the burdens upon those who have to assume high-uncertainty decisions.

Hippieism (or another movement less burdened by the contradictions between its ethics and the structural cost of living) may do for professional life and the increasing range of professionalized occupations what increased capital wealth, scientific technology, and the prestige of entrepreneurship did for bankruptcy: diminish its sting, make it a normal cost of business innovation to be assumed not just by the entrepreneur and his family, but also by the total society. The result was an increased rate of economic change and of productivity. Thus Hippieism may decrease the cost of social change and create a sort of permanent revolution of manners and mores, more effective than political revolution.

Hippieism continues the Puritan tradition by putting the "burden of proof" upon the collectivity for the social forms that constrain the individual. It attempts to increase the capacity of people to relate more quickly at a level where they can give each other a support that is commensurate to the strains placed upon them by the meritocracy. Hence it may turn out to be necessary to the continued existence of the meritocracy. Just as Christianity, a religion proclaiming the supremacy of the meek and the downtrodden, became the religion of some of the best officers and civil servants of the Empire, so Hippieism, instead of drawing only on the failures and semifailures of the system, may become a creed of its more effective servants. It serves as a response in the incessant search of mankind for forms of order that require less violence, less pain, and less contempt. □

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Alice S. Rossi

Women—Terms of Liberation

At least for the moment, Women's Liberation is "in." Its advocates get wide publicity in the mass media, and there is talk, mostly not very serious, about what "those women" want. On campuses, as in professional organizations, there has been mounting pressure to hire and promote more women, to provide child-care facilities for married women students and employees, and to offer courses on the history and the status of women. The voicing of these demands will increase significantly at professional conventions. I predict comparable increases in the political and economic realms, as women organize and demonstrate to change laws and employer practices that discriminate on the grounds of sex. Among activist women there is clearly a new note of optimism.

This optimistic sense does not, however, seem to be shared by many men. The majority of American men appear to be convinced that if they wait out the storm, activism will die down and they can then continue to run government agencies, businesses, and universities. I do not share the view that the women's rights movement is a passing thing. Indeed, I think the movement has not yet reached its crest, though I also believe it faces hard times. What follows is an attempt to sketch both the encouraging and discouraging developments that may mark the women's movement in the next decade.

At the outset I shall draw on my personal experiences in academic and private life, upon participation in several reform movements in recent years, and upon a commitment to fundamental change in American society.

Personal-Political Background

AS AN UNDERGRADUATE and graduate student, I had no particular interest in the status of women, sex roles, or occupational choice. I entered college as an English major, pragmatism dictating an occupational choice of high school English teacher, but romanticism prompting a hope I might become a famous writer. I was one of those thousands of bright, eager New York students attending the city colleges, in my case, Brooklyn College. My first sociology instructor was Louis Schneider, and he began his course by reading a Whitman poem and raising the question: who was this man? what does the poem tell about his time, his place on this globe? I found the sociological dimension of literature so fascinating that I fell in love with the field, and began a life-long affair of the heart and mind that is second only to my own marriage and the three children of that marriage. As a graduate student at Columbia, I was interested in the macroscopic analysis of social institutions; in family and kinship systems rather than the roles of women within family systems; in reference groups, through work with Robert Merton, and in studies of the professions. The occupational role I chose to study in Kingsley Davis's seminar was that of the politician,

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though not once did I think to look into the sex-linked nature of occupational choice.

No woman in 1970, I hope, could be the total innocent I was in 1950 concerning sex discrimination. I dreamed of being one day the president of the American Sociological Society, and of writing a major opus that would be built on the strengths of my two mentors in theory and research. I discounted as peevish envy the claim of my male peers that I would not get a fellowship "because I was a woman," and then, when I was awarded one, the counterclaim that "someone on the faculty must be trying to make you."

It would have been congenial for me to move from graduate training to an academic position as a teacher and secondarily a researcher. But this is a path difficult for a married women in academia, particularly if, like myself, she is married to a sociologist. So I spent ten years as a research associate, following not my own interests so much as the availability of funds and openings: intergroup relations at Cornell, generational differences in the Soviet Union at Harvard, kinship in the middle class at the University of Chicago.

Through these research undertakings, I developed a fascination with a problem seldom adequately stated within sociological theory itself: what are the connections, the strains and accommodations between involvement in the family on the one hand, and the occupational system on the other? I was taking a first step away from the predominant theory that the family and occupational systems require "mechanisms of segregation" with only one member of the family participating significantly in the occupational system—a theory I now view as an intellectual put-down providing a rationale for men as the prime movers in work and politics.

The source of this growing interest was not only research and scholarship; it was also my own personal experience as a faculty wife and mother of young children. As a faculty wife, I had ample opportunity to observe that some sociological theorists did a good job of preventing two members of a family from holding significant positions in the occupational system. At Harvard and again at Chicago, I saw numerous instances of women being kept off the academic turf their husbands claimed as their own. I had offended one such theorist by negotiating an appointment at Harvard without first clearing such a horrendous step with him, then my husband's department chairman. I watched women friends leave the university when they became pregnant and being kept out when they tried to return after their children entered school. And during the two years I had my first two children I learned from personal experience the truth of the existential thesis that "one becomes what one does," for I realized with horror that I was resenting my husband's freedom to continue his full-time academic work despite the addition of parental responsibilities, and even more that I was actually trying to prevent his playing an intimate role in the lives of the children, so that I might at least have ascendancy in parenthood to complement his ascendancy in our profession.

But it took a return to academia, involving a traumatic encounter with the discrimination academic women so often suffer, to jar me out of my innocence. I began a long process of reestablishing connections with my earlier life: intellectual exposure to the ideas of Robert Lynd and C. Wright Mills, personal experiences in a variety of working-class and white-collar clerical jobs, and involvement in radical politics (as an undergraduate in the 1930s and early 1940s). I began to draw together these older layers of the self and to focus the ideas, the personal experience, and the political commitment I now have.

My own trial by fire involved a not untypical story of a bright woman Ph.D.—accepting a research associateship to do a study the male principal investigator was not competent to do on his own, and in which

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he had very little interest. At least initially his interest was low, until I had designed the study, fielded it, and partially analyzed the results. At that point he realized he had a good thing going, and simply announced, despite verbal agreements about co-authorship, that my services were no longer needed. I was a salaried research associate, he a full professor, and as the dean put it bluntly to me, "he is valuable university property; you, unfortunately, are expendable."

My own concern for the status of women, the analysis of sex roles, the study of and active participation in abortion law and divorce law reform, I date to the "slow burn" that began in that first major encounter with sex discrimination in academia. It immediately precipitated the scholarship and writing that led me down the path of immodesty to my first essay on sex equality.

The varied response to that *Daedalus* essay was itself a revealing commentary on American academia. Several male colleagues accused me of troubling their marriages. Young women wrote to say they decided to return to graduate school instead of having another baby. My husband received a sympathetic bereavement card from a West Coast sociologist for having such an upstart wife. A more recent example of this kind was the reaction of male sociologists to the roles my husband and I played at the sociology convention in the fall of 1969. As secretary of the association, my husband was on the platform while I delivered a speech and submitted resolutions for the women's caucus. In the months since then, I have had offers for academic appointments based on the premise that my husband and I are about to be divorced. My husband has been asked how he felt when I delivered that speech, with his male colleagues not knowing how to take his response that he felt pride! During earlier years, my university colleagues criticized me for "not sticking to my last" as research sociologist instead of writing analytic social criticism. Others said it was inappropriate and would "ruin your career" to get involved in the "woman thing," or to be publicly visible as an organizer for abortion law reform, or to write in a woman's magazine that "motherhood was not enough." Nowhere did one hear anything about responsibility for reaching the larger public, nor did one have any sense that there was an obligation for a family sociologist to "do something" about contraception, abortion, or women's rights.

As you may know from reading Eli Ginsberg on life styles of educated women, a supportive husband is an absolute requirement for professional women. Unfortunately, Ginsberg does not understand how a woman gets a supportive husband. It is not a "condition" she is fortunate to have as a base for being something more than homemaker, mother, and husband-relaxer. He is something she looks for, and when she finds him, she marries him. It didn't just happen that my husband is supportive; I chose him in part because he *was*.

From 1964 to the fall of 1969 I enjoyed an ususual status under a research award from the National Institute of Mental Health. This award gave me an academic umbrella to legitimize my status in the university and the independence to undertake my own research. The best education I ever had I acquired on my own during the first year or so of that award: the luxury of getting lost in libraries again, free to acquire that delicious "itch to know," to tackle new fields, turn down any lecture, paper, or course offering that did not interest me. Midway into that five-year award, I undertook a major research study of family and career roles of women college graduates. What time I had beyond this research and family responsibilities was invested in active attempts at social, legal, and political change to benefit women. By early 1969, however, I felt increasingly out of rapport with most of my colleagues in empirical sociology and restless for direct contact with the college-age generation. I had studied these young people; now I wanted to teach them. In the

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fall of 1969, I therefore shifted from research sociology at Johns Hopkins to undergraduate teaching at Goucher College.

Background of Current Women's Movement

IT HAS BECOME FASHIONABLE to link the emergence of the women's liberation movement to the participation of younger women in the civil rights movement. These young women, one reads, drew the conclusion their ancestors did from involvement in the abolitionist cause of the 19th century: that the arguments developed and the battles waged to free the black American could apply to American women, even though women in the abolitionist as in the civil rights movement all too often found themselves treated as second-class creatures good for cooking, typing, and comforting their male leaders. Without detracting from this point at all, I would only remark that the women's liberation movement is a bit more than two years old, and there were important, though less visible, changes among American women earlier in the 1960s.

In fact, I would argue that it was the changed composition of the female labor force during the period beginning with 1940 but rapidly peaking in the 1950s that provided the momentum leading to the establishment of the Kennedy Commission on the Status of Women and the formation of new women's rights organizations in the mid-1960s. So long as women worked mostly before marriage or after marriage only until a first pregnancy, or lived within city limits where there was a diversity of cultural activities to engage them, there were but feeble grounds for a significant movement among women, since their motivation for working was short-lived. Only among women who are relatively permanent members of the work force could daily experience force an awareness of economic inequities based on sex and a determination to do something about them. It was the women who served on the numerous committees of the Kennedy Commission, followed by the thousands who worked with the state commissions established during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, who experienced and then stimulated a mood of rising expectations among American women.

These were committed, knowledgeable, largely middle-aged women who had high hopes, as they filed their reports, that American society would finally do something to improve the status of women. Their hopes were dashed by the treatment they experienced at the spring 1966 conference of representatives from the state commissions brought together by the Department of Labor in Washington. From that frustrating experience, a number of women concluded that little significant change could be expected until a strong organization was built that would be completely independent of the political establishment. This was how the National Organization for Women was formed in the fall of 1966. The range of women's problems that NOW is concerned with has broadened greatly since 1966, but the core continues to be equal treatment in hiring and promotion.

NOW includes lively, dedicated women who are pressing hard against the barriers that restrict women in American society. Except for its action in behalf of airline stewardesses, however, it has had relatively little public or media attention outside of New York, at least if compared to the extraordinary press coverage given to the women's liberation groups this past year. Why so? The answer, I think, lies in differences of stress and outlook between these two tendencies within the women's movement.

A fundamental assumption of American society is that men's primary social roles are in work and women's primary social roles in the family. It is conventionally supposed that all men will want to work at a challenging job. Nothing is so threatening to conventional values as a man who does not want to work or does not want to work at a chal-

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lenging job, and most people are disturbed if a man in a well-paying job indicates ambivalence or dislike toward it. The counterpart for women is any suggestion that they feel ambivalent toward maternity, marriage, or homemaking, probably in that order. In more sociological terms, we might put this as follows: social roles vary in the extent to which it is culturally permissible to express ambivalence or negative feelings toward them. Ambivalence can be admitted most readily toward those roles that are optional, least where they are considered primary. Thus men repress negative feelings toward work and feel freer to express negative feelings toward leisure, sex and marriage, while women are free to express negative feelings toward work but tend to repress them toward family roles.

Applying these hypotheses to the issues that triggered public attention to the women's movement helps explain why reactions are more intense to the women's liberation groups than to women's rights organizations like NOW. There was widespread concern in manpower, government, and university circles when many bright middle-class young men began to depart from an unthinking acceptance of occupational aspirations like those of their fathers, either by shifting away from business, engineering, and science toward teaching, social science, and the humanities, or by indicating that their desire was for a life-style with more time spent away from the job. The movie *The Graduate* symbolized this generational contrast in dramatic form. Universities were concerned when men students expressed resentment of advanced training as a preparation for the adult rat race. But I doubt that anyone would have worried if only women had expressed such resentment. They would simply have been told that if they could not take the academic pressure, they should go home.

Public airing of ambivalence or a shift of values toward the place of work in the lives of men touches a vital nerve in American society. For women, the counterpart is any airing of ambivalence toward what the culture has defined as *their* primary roles, in marriage and maternity. However, once even a minority of women begin to reject their role as sex object, postpone or reject marriage, stop smiling over a shiny waxed floor or, heaven forbid, question the desirability of having children or rearing them themselves as a full-time job, then they touch an equivalent nerve in American society.

Hence, it is when men question work and women question family commitment that we find public responses ranging from a shiver of distate to a convulsion of hate. It has been the questioning of family roles among women's liberation groups that has triggered the current widespread attention to the "woman issue." NOW's focus on employment issues, dealing with an "optional" role for women, cannot compete for media attention with antimarriage and antisexism campaigns by the women's liberation spokesmen.

Employment

WHAT, NOW, are the immediate problems and possibilities? Let me start with the bread-and-butter issue of women's employment. We must first look at a critical determinant of the changed profile of women's participation in the labor force. A lot of nonsense has been written in the past decade to account for the flow of older married women into the labor force. The emphasis has been on the impact of homemaking simplification via frozen foods and complex gadgetry on the one hand, and the search for self-fulfillment and a solution to the "problem without a name" on the other. This is to look for explanations on the supply side of the economic equation. But in an economy as hard-nosed as ours, such a stress is naive, for there must be powerful factors on the demand side that prompted employers to open their doors to older women.

A significant factor underlying this willingness lies in the peculiarities of the demographic structure of the American popula-

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tion between 1940 and 1970. Young women were staying in school longer and marrying at an earlier age, thus shrinking the size of the traditional labor pool of young unmarried women. Even more important, the young women of the 1950s were born in the 1930s, when the birth rate was very low, while at the same time there was a vast increase in the number of young children born during the baby boom of those postwar years. As a result of the rippling effect of this low-fertility cohort, employers *had* to seek women workers from other sources than the young unmarried. Consequently, the trigger was in the first place far more a matter of employer demand than of assertive women pressing to enter into the labor force.

These were also years of vast expansion in precisely those segments of the occupational system in which women have traditionally been prominent. Because schools were flooded with the baby-boom children, women college graduates were assured a welcome as teachers despite age, marital and family status. Colleges and universities were expanding at a rapid rate, and married women were taken on as part-time instructors and full-time researchers. Clerical, sales, and service occupations were expanding, and women with high school degrees were able to choose among the available jobs.

This fortunate circumstance is now changing. In the 1970s there will be a reversal in the demographic pattern. The birth rate is now on the decline, the age at marriage creeping upward, and the time interval between marriage and childbearing widening. In the 1970s there will be more young unmarried and childless married women seeking jobs, for they will be the baby-boom females grown to maturity. At the same time, graduate schools will be producing large numbers of young people with advanced degrees, who will face a very different job market from the one that young Ph.D.s faced during the past 20 years. Up to 1970 the supply of Ph.D.s was far below the demand in institutions of higher education, but the reverse will hold from 1970 onward: the supply will exceed the demand in universities. It will be especially true for the natural sciences, less so for the social sciences until late in the 1970s. This is not to say that the society cannot absorb or does not need highly trained people. From one point of view, the excess supply means an opportunity for reducing class size, providing students with better learning experiences, changing graduate curricula to prepare students for nonacademic jobs, etc. On the other hand, higher education is facing a financial crisis owing to the cutbacks in government funding, corporations pruning their staffs of "frills," and government agencies being on an internal economy drive.

It is therefore of critical importance that women press hard during the next few years to secure equal protection of the law and to assure adequate representation in all segments of the economy. There is already a first sign that women are withdrawing from the labor force: in the last quarter of 1969 the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed a drop in the unemployment rate, though the drop occurred not because people found jobs, but because unemployed young people and women were ceasing to look for jobs.

What women must do in the next several years does not require new legislation, though passage of an Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution would cover a wide range of sex inequities in law and practice. Short of such passage, however, it is true that there has been a legal revolution during the 1960s in regard to protection of women's economic rights. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on sex by all employers of 25 or more employees, employment agencies and unions with 25 or more members, with the exception of educational institutions. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 requires equal wages and salaries for men and women doing equal work. Amended Executive Order 11375 prohibits discrimination based on sex by federal government contractors and subcon-

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tractors. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 prohibits discrimination based on age between 40 and 65. While this act does not prohibit sex discrimination, it could play a significant role in enlarging employment opportunities for women over 40 who wish to return to the labor market or change jobs. Municipal and state Fair Employment Practices commissions and agencies administering state equal pay legislation can also be used to protect employment rights. Women in colleges and universities are not covered by the Civil Rights Act, but women lawyers in activist groups are now working through the channels provided by Executive Order 11375 rather than pressing for congressional change in the educational institutions exemption in the 1964 act. WEAL, the Women's Equity Action League, has mounted an important campaign designed to apply pressure on colleges and universities to comply with this executive order or face cancellation and future loss of government contracts—something no institution of higher education would care to risk. Labor Department guidelines were announced in June 1970 to assure equal job opportunities for women on work paid for under federal contract.

The mere existence of such laws does not solve anything unless women press for their implementation, first by concerted efforts to educate their sex, and second by developing test cases that will bring real changes in women's employment status. Though unglamorous and hard work, and rarely making a flashy news story, this is of greater long-range significance than any amount of bra-burning or antimen speech-making.

Right now it is not clear how national policies in the coming decade will affect the lives of women. In the post-Sputnik decade, there was a widespread campaign to persuade women to enter the labor force, with the government serving as spokesman for short-handed employers trying to meet personnel needs. The laws serving to strengthen women's economic rights were passed during the '60s. It is only in the past few years that Woman Power has emerged, with younger women questioning conventional women's roles. Even while expectations are rising, a reversal of national policy may lie ahead, as a brake is put on military expenditure, and as conservative political elements come into ascendancy with the new-old cry that women belong in the home instead of taking jobs away from men or making "outrageous" demands for maternity benefits and child-care facilities.

At the same time there will be mounting pressure for a national population policy. We are witnessing the advance wave of this policy with the unprecedented shift in opinion regarding abortion in the United States. Those of us who worked on this issue early in the 1960s are now gratified and disturbed by the ease with which total repeal of abortion laws looms as a reality: gratified because this represents the fruition of long, hard effort, disturbed by the quite mixed motivations behind the passage of such legislation.

Public dialogue on population is increasing significantly, and we begin to hear large families discussed as undesirable for individual couples and for society at large. But the problem is that women are being told to hold back on their fertility in the same era in which there may be a shift away from encouraging them to seek significant work in the economy, and when much volunteer work is being transformed into paid employment for the poor. Two such conflicting policies—low fertility and minimal participation in the labor force—can have serious consequences in undercutting the confidence of young women. It would be like putting them in a revolving door and spinning it: not permitting them easy entry or significant work *outside* the home, yet not permitting them fulfillment in a bountiful maternity *inside* the home. The social price of such a conflict could well be a rise in alienation, escape into drugs, alcoholism, or joyless sex and an even greater tendency to live vicariously through the few children they have.

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I would like to think that women would take the lead in calling attention to the human dimensions of national policies that have particular impact on the lives of women. For the organizations directly involved in action concerning women's rights, such a thorough analysis is difficult. It takes time and some distancing from the heat of battle, and hence becomes a special responsibility of women in academia. But their voice will not be heard nor will their analyses be pertinent unless they keep in close contact with the women's rights movement and national policy formation. A good example can be seen in the congressional hearings on the birth control pill this past spring, at which women's liberation spokesmen engaged in widely publicized protest. Their clamor was, in my judgment, ill-advised. We do not halt small-pox vaccinations because a dozen children die from them each year, or stop using antibiotics because 500 users die a year; by the same token, an element of risk in contraceptive pills is, in and of itself, no basis for calling a halt to their use. In no way is this to say that women should not have completely safe contraceptives, or that more emphasis should not be put on male contraceptives, sterilization, and abortion as acceptable procedures to control unwanted births. What I am urging is that women be more thorough and thoughtful in their analysis of a problem before rushing to the streets and into print with arguments that may appear sound superficially but are actually political posturing.

Sexuality

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION in human sexuality, and the implications of such research for the social roles of the sexes is another matter that merits increased attention in the 1970s. Fifty years of accepting Freudian concepts of female sexuality will not be quickly undone by current research on the human sexual response. Psychoanalytic theories have penetrated deep into the modern consciousness, and are reinforced a dozen times a day through commercials that attempt to sell everything from an Ohrbach dress to detergents. What concerns me equally is to be spared another 50 years of anti-Freudian polemics from the women's movement.

Very often such anti-Freudian analyses are couched in Marxist terms. It may serve unstated political ends, but it is historically false and analytically simplistic to claim that women's sexual role reflects the bourgeois notion of man's desire to possess and amass private property, or to charge that the second-class citizenship of women merely reflects capitalist society's need to coerce them into domestic slavery and conspicuous consumption. Marxist analyses of women and capitalism have an element of truth only if you substitute industrialization for capitalism. As the Communist nations have industrialized, the same hard pinch of double jobs is detectable in the lives of their employed married women, and the same loss of humane values in the work place. Nor is there much evidence that the relations between the sexes are particularly different in Communist nations from those in Western Europe or the United States. The major difference is merely one of intensity: no country can match the United States for media saturated with exploitative and male-dominant sex, typified so well by the infantile or cruel acts of physical rape that fill so many pages of Norman Mailer's books.

A number of radical-feminist analyses begin with a good critique of the Freudian fallacies concerning female sexuality. Let us now assume it to be established that there is no differentiation between a clitoral and vaginal orgasm; that the myth of women's relative asexuality has been shown to be a biological absurdity; and that women's sexuality has been suppressed through a socialization of gender roles that urges passivity and submission to men. Liberation group discussions of these points can be enormously helpful for the psychological release of the submerged sexual selves of many women. But one must also reckon with the fact that

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the Masters-Johnson research only illuminates the *physiological* dimension of human sexuality. It tells us nothing about the nonsexual components of human sexual behavior. Critiques of Freud's notions of female sexuality are now commonplace, but I have seen little as yet that suggests an alternative developmental theory, with the exception of recent work by John Gagnon and William Simon. I would suggest that more critical attention should be paid to two factors bearing upon sexual behavior in American society. One is the view that sex is an intense high-pressure drive that constrains the individual to seek sexual gratification either directly or indirectly. This view is apparent not only in psychoanalytic but in sociological literature as well. Kingsley Davis, for example, considers sex a high-intensity, social constant that must be channeled lest it find expression in behavior that threatens the maintenance of collective life. Part of the Freudian legacy, however, is that we have become extremely adept at weeding out the sexual ingredient in many forms of nonsexual behavior and symbolism while rarely engaging in what may be an equally fruitful analysis: an examination of sexual behavior as an agency for expressing nonsexual motives.

For in truth, sexual behavior in American society serves not merely sexual needs, but also power and status needs compensating for a lack of gratification in other areas of life. A further complication is the pressure on American adults to remain pegged at an adolescent stage of development and behavior. A man or woman of 45 is not the same person as a 20-year-old, and to perform sexually as if they were is to require that the man overperform sexually and that the woman persist in a girlish style that is equally inappropriate to her stage of sexual and social maturity. In the case of men, overperformance can be stoked by extra-marital adventures or self-stimulation via pornographic literature or dramatic productions. Men are good at such detached self-stimulation since they learn sexuality in part through masturbation, which itself paves the way for a greater detachment in the sexual act than women tend to have. It may also be the case that marital satisfaction and happiness decline with duration of marriage in American society largely because adults are expected to perform at 40 or 50 as they did at 20 or 25. This is a reflection of what Henry Murray has described as the retarded adolescent stage of development of American society. If, as a culture, we could move in the direction of mature interdependence between individuals, across social classes, religious, racial, and sexual lines, to say nothing of national boundaries, we might come to develop what Kenneth Boulding has described as "reconciling styles" in which we take primary pleasure in life from identifying with the process of change itself: watching and taking pleasure from our own individual growth and change, and the growth and change of our friends, spouses, and children.

What has this to do with the women's movement in the 1970s? I think we should be prepared for intense masculine backlash to the demands women make that are rooted not merely in the specific area of work or home management or parental responsibility, but in displacements from a deeper level. Demands for equality for women are threats to men's self-esteem and sense of sexual turf. Some feminists will say, fine and good: men have been our oppressors long enough, now they must give ground. But most women do not wish to live embattled and manless lives, and my impression is there are far more men in the younger generation than there were in my own who are eager to acquire a new lifestyle, a gentler and more meaningful relationship with women. There is much need for research and sober analysis on the social correlates of varying styles of sexual behavior; following that, a great need for a rather different conception of sex education than anything we have seen in school curricula or gymnastic sex manuals to date.

Some women who have recently been ac-

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tive in women's caucuses in academic associations have begun to compare notes on the responses their demands are eliciting from male colleagues. One of the more interesting hypotheses emerging from these comparisons is that the men most resistant to and in some cases almost hysterical about women's pressure for equal treatment are men known to be sexually exploitative in their relations to women students. One such professor, whose feathers were decidedly ruffled when the sociology women's caucus displaced a luncheon meeting he was to speak at, complained prettily, with an expectation that it would flatter rather than anger me: "But Alice, what is all the fuss about? There is always room in graduate departments for an extraordinary woman!" It was beyond his ability or willingness to understand that sex equality in academia would not be achieved until there was room for as many "average" women as for "average" men. Some of my caucus colleagues believe that, beneath the surface, men such as this are not able to relate to a woman colleague at the same or higher status rank and feel comfortable only in superordinate positions from which they can dispense professorial and sexual favors.

The male backlash is bound to come, and there are signs of it already. A male friend of mine recently sent me a xeroxed copy of a letter of recommendation to the chairman of his department. The applicant is an unmarried woman who had taught in the writer's department and taken graduate courses with him. He wrote:

> When Miss X arrived she was somewhat lacking in self-confidence, uncertain whether there was a place for her in sociology. Now she recognizes that she can, as a female, contribute to the field without becoming a spinster or a swinger. I say this to emphasize that she is a mature person not swayed by the superficial values so evident on campuses today. In short, she is not a participant in the women's liberation movement but a competent sociologist. . . . She is neither seductive nor emasculating and will be a useful colleague.

I cite such examples to point out that we must have thick skins—at least as thick as those of our grandmothers in the suffrage, union, and socialist movements of an earlier day. We shall need every bit of sex solidarity we can get.

Women's Rights Organizations

EVERYONE KNOWS there has already been a good deal of factionalism within the larger women's movement. We have WITCH, WEAL, Radical Feminists, FEW, NOW, WRAP, and there are undoubtedly more to come. Listening to men, one senses a gleeful pleasure at seeing such sectarianism; many wishfully view this as a dissipation of effort in a noisy fizzle. But this need not be true so long as those who form a new group do not concentrate on fruitless attacks upon the group they left or on styles of protest directed mainly at getting attention from the press. Diversity within a movement can be a strength, for there is no one problem or one solution. Certain women's liberation groups may be trying to recruit for a political revolutionary movement yet find some of their members graduating from consciousness-raising group sessions to affiliation with a NOW chapter. In turn, many NOW chapters have lost members to the liberation groups. Women lawyers have on occasion separated from the more diffuse organizations, the better to focus on campaigns making greater use of their skills. Other groups may concentrate on demonstrations protesting sex imagery in the media or beauty pageants. There is far more risk in frantically dissipating one's efforts by doing a great variety of things than in organizational splitting.

Let me end with a comment concerning the relationship between the women's rights movement and the movements of black Americans. There is a serious danger that the essentially middle-class and white women's groups will be as guilty of misunderstanding the problems confronting black men and women today as an earlier counterpart in the middle-class suffrage movement

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of the 19th century misunderstood the political efforts of working-class people.

In recent years, many women in the women's rights movement have taken up with great moral righteousness the task of informing black women that they should avoid the trap of moving through the same series of mistakes that middle-class women were subjected to in the past. A conference on women last February at Cornell culminated in a dramatic session on the black woman in America, in which the largely middle-class white audience hissed black women and men on a panel who spoke of the need for black women to give attention to the black man and his position in the community, to be supportive of their men's struggle for greater self-esteem and dignity. Renee Neblett of the Boston Black Panthers defined the black woman as a strong person who can act independently and make decisions but, most important of all, a woman with an ability to relate to men, one who would do anything to help her man retain or regain his manhood and insure the survival of her people.

In reading the transcript of this session, I felt anger and shame that the middle-class women in the audience had not appreciated the difference in the positions of the sexes among whites and blacks. John Dollard's description of caste in a Southern town is as relevant today as three decades ago, when he pointed out that within the white caste the man is in the superior position, and within the black caste the woman is more often in the superior position. If black women, largely poor but still more advantageously placed than black men, have the humanity and dignity to help raise the self-esteem of their men—to realize, as one of my black students put it, that the black female is no better than her man despite a history of educational and economic superiority—then this is a great tribute to black women in America that unfortunately is not matched by a comparable dedication on the part of white men toward their women.

Nor do we sufficiently realize the continuing relevance of class differences in the ways a problem is perceived and experienced. Abraham Maslow's need hierarchy thesis is helpful, for it suggests that middle-class women, whose physical needs for food, clothing, shelter, and sheer security of person are relatively assured, are free to concentrate on a higher level of need. A working-class person or group cannot indulge in such luxuary until needs for survival and security are met. I think, therefore, that right now the middle-class women's rights movement can find a collaborative arrangement with black women only on such bread-and-butter issues as protecting and expanding economic and political rights. Beyond this, the white women's movement should try to deepen its understanding of the differences between their relations to men and those of black women. Before giving advice, one must understand. Listen, for example, to a black poet's phrasing of the issue:

blackwoman
is an
in and out
rightsideup
action-image
of her man . . .
in other
(blacker) words;
She's together,
if
he
bes.

—Don Lee

What white poet has yet said of a man, "he's together if she is."

Despite the optimists in our midst, or the pessimists who anticipate revolution in the streets—after which, of course, a magical transformation would follow—I think we are in for a long and hard battle—cultural, legal, and political—before we reach any goal of sex equality for black or white in this nation. It will be won not by quickie-action skirmishes but by the persistent beat of the hearts and work of the minds of at least another generation. □

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Michael Harrington

Old Working Class, New Working Class

In recent years the American working class has been called conservative, militant, reactionary, progressive, authoritarian, social democratic and, the unkindest cut of all, nonexistent. Except for the last, all the labels fit. The labor movement—I sharpen the focus on the organized section of the working class—contains more blacks than any other institution in American society, as well as more young whites attracted by the populist racism of George Wallace. Notwithstanding its tendencies toward ethnocentrism and anti-intellectualism, the labor movement has provided a decisive political impetus for whatever democratic planning there is in America. The organized workers are, in short, not one thing; they are a varied, dynamic, contradictory mass whose position in society can drive its members toward a practical social idealism, an antisocial corporatism, or any one of the complicated variants between those extremes.

I believe that the American workers have been a crucial force behind every social gain of the past two generations, and in domestic politics their unions constitute an American kind of de facto social democracy. Perhaps the exigencies of the future will deepen the best impulses within the labor movement, and I am on the side of those within it who are fighting for such a development. But my partisanship does not make me an apologist. Precisely because I am concerned and involved, I cannot afford to gloss over tendencies that run counter to my hopes. I must try to understand the past and present of the working class with as much candor as possible if I am to help those struggling to create its future. In these pages I will try to do that by way of a broad overview of the organized and organizable working class. Insofar as I deal with history, it will be in order to understand the current position of the unions and the various futures it could make possible. But before that can be attempted, I must define a vexing term: the working class. There are serious scholars who argue that it no longer exists in America. My conclusion, however, will be that there is not simply one working class in America but two—an old working class still quite vital and a new working class being created by political and economic evolution.

It is an extraordinary thing that those who argue there is no working class in the United States can be found at the most disparate points of the political spectrum. Herbert Marcuse, who had a notable influence on the New Left youth of the 1960s, writes that " 'the people,' previously the ferment of social change, have 'moved up' to become the ferment of social cohesion." Paul Sweezy and the late Paul Baran, sympathizers first with Russian, then with Chinese Commu-

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nism, argued that the organized workers in the United States have been "integrated into the system as consumers and ideologically conditioned members of the society." Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., an activist liberal, says

> that the lines of division in our politics have fundamentally altered. The issues are no longer social or economic so much as they are cultural and moral. It is no longer the common men against the boss as much as it is the rational against the indignant, the planner against the spoiler, the humanist against the uneducated, the young against the old.

Perhaps the most emphatic statement of the theme comes from Clark Kerr, a brilliant, pragmatic technocrat. He holds that "the working class not only tends to disappear as a class-conscious and recognizable element in society; it needs to disappear if modern industrial society is to operate with full effectiveness." High technology, he continues, requires consensus and cooperation and therefore cannot tolerate class conflict over basic principles. So even though there are obvious differences between industrialists and file clerks, there are not "any clear class lines to divide them—only infinite gradations."

I disagree with those, from the authoritarian Left to the democratic Center, who think that the American working class does not exist (the Right, which I will not consider here, tends to have a vulgar-Marxist, or paranoid, version of the power of organized labor). To use Marx's famous distinction, the working class in this country is not simply a class "in itself"—a mass sharing "a common situation and common interests"—but it is a class "for itself" and the "interests which it defends . . . [are] class interests."

II

First of all, consider the "old" working class: the primarily blue-collar workers who do physical labor in the industrial economy. It has renewed itself in the last quarter of a century and become a greater force in American politics than at any time in the nation's history.

The total nonagricultural labor force in 1969 numbered 77.902 million men and women. Of these, 48.993 million were "production and nonsupervisory workers on private payrolls," with the 14.647 million in manufacturing the largest single component. Another 12.591 million were employed by federal, state, and local government, and many of them held down such blue-collar and organizable jobs as sanitation man or postman. There were 20.210 million union members, mainly concentrated in machinery, transportation equipment, contract construction, and transportation services.

Among the unorganized one would find the working poor, who numbered close to 4 million in 1969 according to the government's optimistic definition of poverty. An almost equal number of the "near poor" (who include more whites and tend more to live in families headed by a male than do the poor themselves) were largely outside the unions. Those neither poor nor union members are most numerous in wholesale and retail trade, in finance, insurance, real estate, and the service industries. A good number of these are, of course, white-collar workers, and not a few of them receive wage increases from antiunion employers whenever organized labor in the industry, or the area, makes a gain.

This working class, both organized and unorganized, has a "common situation and common interests," experienced first and foremost in the reality that it does not have enough money. In 1969 the Bureau of Labor Statistics computed a "modest" budget for an urban family of four at $9,076, an amount in excess of the income of well over half the families in the United States. The trade unionists, most of whom are among the better-off members of the "old" working class, do not achieve this standard: they are neither poor nor affluent but in-between and distinctly deprived. In September of 1969 the "average production worker" took home

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$102.44 for a full week's work, and manufacturing workers, most of whom were organized, only received $106.75. Moreover, since these figures were computed, the cost of living has gone up by almost 20 percent and the real wage of the workers has slightly decreased.

Even if one upgrades all of these numbers because of the enormous increase in the number of working wives—18 million of them in 1969, double the figure for 1950—who add an average of 25 percent to their family income, the total still falls short of the government's modest budget. The "modest" standard, it must be emphasized, lives up to its name: it allows for a two-year-old used car and a new suit every four years. In addition to this deficiency in income, most of the union members are employed in manufacturing, construction, and transportation, i.e., in jobs with little intrinsic interest and, in the case of an assembly line in an auto plant, a dehumanizing routine. They are paid not as individuals but as members of a class: after the age of 25, the worker's income does not normally vary with increasing experience, as does that of professional and managerial employees, but usually rises as part of a negotiated group settlement. Indeed, the very fact of being paid a wage by the hour emphasizes another determinant of working-class existence, the vulnerability of the job to the vagaries of the business cycle, the ever-present possibility of being laid off.

Every governmental projection indicates a substantial increase during the next decade in the number of Americans who live under such conditions. The only category of industrial workers that will be in both absolute and relative decline over that period is that of the nonfarm laborers, which is supposed to fall from 3.6 million to 3.5 million. But the number of operatives and craftsmen will increase, and the unions that were created because of the common interest of this great mass are certain to grow in the foreseeable future into the largest membership organizations in the society. In 1980, then, the "old" working class will be larger than ever before in American history.

HOW IS IT that such a massive social phenomenon and such obvious trends have been ignored, or declared nonexistent, by many observers? In part, as Penn Kemble has argued, the vantage point of intellectual perception has changed radically during the past 30 years. The social critics of the 1960s and early '70s are relatively affluent compared to the marginality and even joblessness they had experienced during the Depression. This change in their own class position may have made them less sensitive to the daily struggles of less favored people. At the crudest this indifference could be rationalized by confusing the relative decline in manufacturing jobs—they accounted for 39.3 percent of nonagricultural employment in 1919 and only for 28.8 percent in 1969—with an absolute decrease in the number of workers and a consequent loss of political and social power. This error was sometimes abetted by a failure to explore the fine print in the governmental definitions in which, to take one pertinent example, laundry workers, garage repairmen, and dishwashers in the service industries are not classified as blue collar.

Somewhat more subtly, there were those who acknowledged the existence of the traditional working class but argued that it had become co-opted by the society and therefore lost its distinctive character. But that, as we have just seen, is a misleading simplification. It may be that the workers, as Sweezy and Baran argue, want to be "integrated into the society as consumers," but it is surely of greater moment that the structure of injustice will not allow them, as a rule, even a "modest" income.

Still, the most sophisticated revision of the idea of the working class is based on a very real and momentous shift in class structure (a shift that is also, as will be seen, the key to the emergence of a "new" working class). It is argued that economic classes defined by property relationships—entrepreneurs

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owning factories, shopkeepers their little businesses, farmers and peasants their plots of land, and workers possessing only their labor power to sell—have become obsolete. The joint stock company, Ralf Dahrendorf holds, separated ownership and control and thereby obviated a theory of class determined by property or the lack of it. He concludes that in the advanced economies authority, not ownership, is central to the formation of social class. And Alain Touraine writes, "it is anachronistic to depict social armies confronting each other. As we pass from societies of accumulation to programmed societies, relationships of power become increasingly more important than opposition between social groups."

These theories are usually developed with the comment that Marx, fixated as he was upon a primitive model of capitalism, was unaware of such changes. I will deal with this historical error in a footnote, since it is not central to the main line of this analysis.* For even granting that there have been profound transformations in the structure of the advanced economies—some of them unforeseen by even so perspicacious a thinker as Marx—what is it that makes the workers I have just described more likely to join unions than any group in society? What predisposes them toward a certain political point of view? The answer, I believe, is embarrassingly old-fashioned. These workers derive their livelihoods almost exclusively from the sale of their labor power on an anonymous, and uncertain, labor market and it is quite easy to distinguish them from their "fellow employees" who are corporation presidents or managers. There is a social chasm between these groups, not the infinite gradations postulated by Clark Kerr.

TO BEGIN with, in the upper reaches of the society property is not quite so passé as the notion of a clear-cut "separation" of ownership and control suggests. A 1967 *Fortune* survey revealed that 30 percent of the 500 largest industrial concerns "are clearly controlled by identifiable individuals or by family groups." And, as that survey pointed out, absolute numbers can be more revealing than percentages when one deals with the holdings of the executive officer of a multi-billion-dollar corporation. The board chairman of General Motors at that time "only" owned 0.017 percent of the enterprise over which he presided—but that little fraction was worth $3.917 million. The chairman of Chrysler, with a mere 0.117 percent of his company's stock, had a $2.380 million interest in the business.

* In *The Communist Manifesto,* Marx unquestionably thought society was polarizing into a giant working class and a tiny bourgeoisie and held to a rather simplistic, property-determined theory of social class. But as early as 1856, Marx, whom Dahrendorf charges with not having understood the importance of the joint stock company, wrote, "It cannot be denied that the application of the joint stock company to industry characterizes a new epoch in the economic life of modern nations." (Marx-Engels, *Werke* [hereafter *MEW*], Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1953, XII, p. 33.) In a famous letter to Engels in 1858 in which he outlined *Das Kapital,* he indicated that the culmination of his analysis—which was never written—would deal with "stock capital as the most developed form [of capitalism] with all its contradictions." (*MEW,* XXIX, p. 312).

In the third volume of *Das Kapital,* Marx did refer briefly to the separation of ownership and control, and Engels added a note when he published the volume after Marx's death saying that this trend had become even more important. In the revised edition of his famous popularization of Marxism, *Anti-Dühring,* Engels was even more emphatic on this count. (*MEW,* XX, p. 617.) Moreover in the posthumously published *Theories of Surplus Value,* Marx not only discussed the appearance of new middle strata linked to the phenomenon of the corporation but saw them as an inevitable outcome of the capitalist dynamic itself. (*MEW,* XXVI, Pt. 1, p. 190.) Why, then, did Marx fail to include this material in his own theory of class? The answer is found on the last page of Volume III of *Das Kapital.* It constitutes only the second page of Marx's discussion of classes and it concludes: "Here the manuscript breaks off." But even though death prevented Marx from formally and systematically revising the simplifications and errors of the *Manifesto,* it is clear that he understood that the class structure of his own time was being profoundly modified by the separation of ownership and control. Much of what Dahrendorf, and others, present as a critique of Marx is thus only Marxian common sense.

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More generally, the nonowning managers at the top of the society accumulate wealth. They often enjoy special stock deals and other arrangements: in 1971 the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the biggest part of executive pay in the auto industry was a bonus based on the size of profits. So it is that these managers must be counted among the golden elite, the 6½ percent of the American consumer units which, in December 1962 (there has been no downward redistribution since), had incomes of $50,000 a year or more and owned 57 percent of the wealth of the society. At stake here is not simply the annual pay but, in Herman Miller's definition of wealth, "the sum total of equity in a home or business, liquid assets, investment assets, the value of automobiles owned and miscellaneous assets held in trust, loans to individuals, oil royalties, etc." By that standard, the "nonowning" managers own quite a bit.

The middle levels of management, particularly in the modern corporations, are not so easy to define and will be discussed at greater length in the section on the "new" working class. Now it is enough to note that this labor market is not anonymous, its salaries are not determined on a class basis, as in the case of workers, and it is less subject to the ups and downs of the business cycle. Some of the halcyon notions of the security of these strata were rudely dispelled by the recent Nixon recession, yet no one should have any trouble in distinguishing it from the lot of the wage workers.

So there is a distinct and identifiable universe of the working class even after one has taken into account the tremendous changes in class structure since Marx. The pay is better now, the boom-and-bust rhythm has been attenuated, the famous built-in stabilizers, such as unemployment insurance, are at work. Yet there are crucial elements of working-class life—relative deprivation, the impersonality of the work process, greater susceptibility to layoffs than experienced by other groups in the society, group wages—which remain and are the objective determinants of the class itself. Perhaps one of the best statements of this reality was made in the study of the English affluent worker carried out under the direction of John H. Goldthorpe and David Lockwood.

This project subjected the thesis of the *embourgeoisement* of the working class in that country to a careful empirical examination. It concluded that in England this cooptation simply had not taken place:

> A factory worker can double his living standards and still remain a man who sells his labour to an employer in return for wages; he can work at a control panel rather than on an assembly line without changing his subordinate position in the organization of production; he can live in his own house in a "middle class" estate or suburb and still remain little involved in white-collar social worlds.

English data cannot, of course, merely be imported to America and applied to the quite different variant of capitalism that exists here. Yet the objective indices show that in the United States as in England the worker is not an integrated participant in affluence but a member of a quite distinct stratum. And this stratum, for the most part, is neither poor nor modestly well off, indeed is better off then ever before—yet still quite deprived. But these statistics are of little political and intellectual significance if they simply describe unrelated facts about an inert mass. One has to come to the second part of Marx's famous distinction: Is the "old" working class a class "for itself," does it act collectively from a consciousness of its position in society?

III

A preliminary warning: If one looks for a "European"-type class-consciousness in the United States—something like the attitude of that Frenchman, who, when T. S. Eliot accidentally jostled him, responded, "Me, I am a proletarian exploited by the capitalist class"—it cannot be found. It is not even

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necessary for my purposes that a majority of the workers use the term "working class" to describe their position in society. (When asked to locate themselves on a three-class scale of upper, middle, and lower, the overwhelming majority of Americans, including the members of the AFL–CIO, will say that they are middle-class; but on a five-class scale, on which the working class is in between the poor and the middle class, many more will identify themselves as working class.) I am not in search of a rhetoric but want to describe how workers behave politically in order to maximize goals which go beyond their immediate self-interest, or even the narrow advantage of their craft and skill, and which have to do with the needs of the entire class and through it of the nation itself.

There are two major lines of argument, sometimes convergent, which hold that, even though there may be objective determinants of class in America, there has either never been or cannot now be any significant mass consciousness of that fact, moving workers to political or social action. On the one hand, it is said that the exceptional historical character of the national experience prevented the development of such a consciousness. On the other hand, it is claimed that the recent evolution of the American economy has produced a consensus in which interest groups compete over the details of the distribution of wealth but classes no longer contest more basic questions of the very mode of allocation itself.

The theory that America has always been immune to the class struggle is the generalization of a profound half-truth.* A country without a feudal past, possessing a vast continent to be settled once genocide had been committed against the Indians, and populated by successive waves of immigrants from the most varied European backgrounds, must differ in a number of crucial ways from the nation-states of the Old World where capitalism first emerged. Lenin wrote of America (and Britain) that there were "exceptionally favorable conditions, in comparison with other countries, for the deep-going and widespread development of capitalism."

Morris Hillquit, theorist of American socialism in the first third of the century, also talked of the "exceptional position" of America with its vast land mass, its prosperous agriculture, its tendency to make wage labor seem only a "temporary condition." But once we grant the apparent uniqueness of American capitalism, is it indeed true that class consciousness failed to play an important, much less a decisive, role in the nation's history? I think not. The conditions we describe as "American exceptionalism" slowed the emergence of that consciousness and even made its anticapitalism seem formally procapitalist. It did not, however, stop social class from becoming the most important single determinant in our political life.

Moreover, the chief factor inhibiting and distorting working-class self-consciousness was not, as is widely thought, the wealth of the society. Werner Sombart's famous remark that socialism in America ran aground "on shoals of roast beef and apple pie" was made in 1906 and has survived as a myth until this day. But, in a history of American labor (edited by that patriarch of the non-class interpretation, J. R. Commons), Don Lescohier described as follows the two decades prior to World War I:

> Undergoing the vicissitudes of repeated periods of unemployment, experiencing in many occupations a less rapid rise of wages than living costs, [the wage earners] could see that while some groups, like the building mechanics, had made distinct progress, other groups, like the iron and steel workers, employees in meat packing plants, cotton mills, saw mills, tobacco and clothing factories had not held their own against the rapidly rising cost of living.

Indeed, if one compares Germany and

* What follows is a summary of a much more detailed, and documented, analysis to be found in my *Socialism* (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1972).

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the United States between 1890 and 1914, the workers experienced steadily a relative rise in their living standards in the country that produced a mass social democratic movement rather than in the one that did not. But if it was not prosperity that prevented the development of a socialist class consciousness in America, what was? Selig Perlman provided part of the answer in his seminal *Theory of The Labor Movement:*

> American labor remains the most heterogeneous laboring class in existence—ethnically, religiously and culturally. With a working class of such composition, to make socialism or communism the official "ism" of the movement would mean, even if other conditions permitted it, deliberately driving the Catholics, who are perhaps a majority in the American Federation of Labor, out of the labor movement, since with them an irreconcilable opposition to socialism is a matter of religious principle. Consequently, the only acceptable "consciousness" for American labor as a whole is "job consciousness" with a limited objective of "wage and job control" . . . .

Perlman was right: heterogeneity made it impossible to organize the great mass of the newly arriving European workers until the '30s and acted, in a thousand different ways, to impede consciousness of membership in a single and united class. Yet Perlman was wrong: even in the '20s when he wrote, and much more so later on, the workers were constantly forced by the exigencies of their class situation to go beyond "wage and job control" and raise class issues about the organization of the entire society. Strangely enough, many scholars failed to take note of this significant phenomenon. For they had adopted, even when they were antisocialist, the criteria of the left wing of the Socialist party: that class consciousness must necessarily and exclusively take the form of allegiance to a socialist or workers' party. That party alliance did not come about; class consciousness did.

So by the early 1920s the majority of the AFL rebelled against Gompers's hostility to social legislation, adopted an approach very much like the one embodied in the socialist proposals that had been rejected during the 1890s, and embarked upon a course that led to an alliance with the Socialist party in the Conference for Progressive Political Action and support for the La Follette campaign in 1924. In 1920 the AFL was in favor of public ownership of the utilities, organization of cooperatives, and workmen's compensation. The railroad men were for the nationalization of their industry, and the Chicago Federation of Labor was in favor of a labor party. The AFL, as Philip Taft has written of the period, "found itself, against its wishes, propelled into more active political participation." These developments did not, for the reasons Perlman described among others, take place in the guise of a socialist class consciousness. But they were a clear indication that workers were being driven to consider not simply their jobs but the society as a whole.

The class-conscious movement of the '20s did not succeed and in the latter half of the decade there was a reversion to Gompers's "voluntarist" philosophy. But the reason for this reversal involved a trend that was to prepare the way for the great explosion of working-class militancy in the '30s. With immigration severely restricted after World War I, the expanding economy of the mid-1920s recruited its new workers from the farm and thus tipped the national demographic balance from rural to urban. The initial impact of this progressive turn of events was conservative. Ordinarily, one would have expected the unions to have grown and bettered their wages and working conditions during prosperity, but the influx of farmers, who could be satisfied by cheap wages and were suspicious of group action, depressed the labor market. The war and postwar militancy had driven the average weekly wage in manufacture up to $26.30 in 1920, but in 1921 wages dropped to $22.18 and in 1929 they had only reached $25.03, more than a dollar below the level of 1920.

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Still, two momentous events had taken place in the '20s. The American working class was no longer a port of entry for millions of the foreign-born and was becoming, for the first time in its history, homogeneous; and labor was now part of a new urban majority. Once the discrepancy between low wages and high productivity in the '20s helped bring about the Great Depression, these developments were of enormous importance. They helped promote the organization of industrial workers in the CIO and were a major reason why a vast political movement based on class became a crucial feature of politics in the '30s. Richard Hofstadter, one of the few scholars to recognize the importance of this fact, wrote, "The demands of a large and powerful labor movement combined with the interests of the unemployed, gave the New Deal a social democratic tinge that had never before been present in American reform movements."

IV

For all the dramatic struggles of the 1930s, it is clear in retrospect that the working class was not in a revolutionary mood. This point must be stressed because many scholarly critics of the notion of a class struggle in the U.S. have unwittingly adopted, not simply a Marxian definition of the concept, but a "romantic" Marxian definition. For Raymond Aron, a seminal theorist of the notion of "industrial society" (i.e., of consensus capitalism), the class struggle only exists where there is a "fight to the death" between workers and capitalists which eventuates in violence.

Such an idea can indeed be found in *The Communist Manifesto,* for it is a corollary of Marx's youthful error of supposing that society was fast polarizing into only two classes. But the mature Marx did not hold this view and defined the class struggle in a far more subtle and complex fashion which can also serve as an excellent guide to the reality of the American 1930s—and '70s. In his famous Inaugural Address to the International Workingmen's Association, Marx spoke of a campaign to restrict the working day to ten hours in England as "a struggle between the blind rule of supply and demand, which is the political economy of the middle class, and the social control of production through intelligence and foresight, which is the political economy of the working class." *

The kind of class struggle envisioned in *The Manifesto* did not emerge in the America of the 1930s or since; the kind analyzed in the Inaugural Address has. Given the obvious exigencies of the situation, the workers were committed as a class—and, with the elections of 1936, organized as a class—to win full-employment policies requiring that the government manage the economy. But if the American workers thus committed themselves to "the social control of production through intelligence and foresight, which is the political economy of the working class," they did not call this policy "socialist." It was not simply that the historic factors identified by Perlman were at work. Beyond that, as Leon Samson has argued in a fas-

* Those who wish to downgrade this speech usually argue that Marx was making pragmatic political concessions to the British trade unionists who were so important to him in the First International. But, as I document at length in my book *Socialism,* the tactic of the Inaugural was central to the politics of Marx and Engels from the late '50s to the time of their respective deaths. There was a brief period during and after the days of the Paris Commune when responding to Bakuninist critics on their Left and the vilifiers of the Commune on their Right, they seemed to turn back to the language and mood of the *Manifesto.* But that was only an episode. It is, however, important to note that there is one basic oversimplification in the Inaugural. As early as he mid-1850s, in his analysis of the "imperial socialism" of Napoleon III, Marx had understood that the conservatives and reactionaries could use collectivist methods to serve their own purposes. (*MEW* XII, pp. 24, 27, 33.) This notion was deepened, particularly by Engels, in response to Bismarckian "socialism" and led to the theory of "state socialism" in which government intervenes on behalf of the bourgeoisie. So a more comprehensive Marxian development of the formulation in the Inaugural would emphasize that the "intelligence and foresight" would have to be exercised by and for the workers, not by and for Bonapartists, Bismarckians, fascists, Stalinists, Maoists, etc.

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cinating book, Americanism had become a kind of "substitutive socialism." In this country, as distinct from Europe, bourgeois ideology itself stressed equality, classlessness, and the opportunity to share in wealth.

So in the '30s there emerged a mass political movement based upon class institutions (the unions) which demanded, not simply narrow legislation related to the needs of this or that trade or craft, but a mode of planned social organization that would give priority to the value of full employment. Since it involved significant modifications of capitalist society as it had existed until then in the United States, this idea met with violent resistance, both physical and ideological, from most employers. They recognized that, even though the worker insisted upon his loyalty to the American ideal, he was reading it in terms of his own class needs.

Thus I would argue that, for all of its truly exceptional characteristics, American capitalism eventually forced its working class to become conscious of itself and to act as a major factor in political life. The theorists of industrial, or postindustrial, society might even grant this historical case. And they would add that in the period after World War II changes in capitalist society led to the virtual disappearance of that class struggle.

V

Raymond Aron was an early advocate of this view. Economic conflicts over wages and hours, he said, are quite real.

> It is pure hypocrisy to think that they are always resolved in an equitable fashion, pure hypocrisy to deny a struggle over the division of the national income. But it does not thereby happen that, on the strictly economic plane, the group of workers and the group of capitalists oppose one another in a fight to the death, each one having an *essential* interest opposed to the other. The common interest of both, within the framework of the system [*cadre du régime*] is the prosperity of the enterprise and of the economy; it is growth whose necessary conditions correspond simultaneously to the interests of the managers and the employees.

Daniel Bell transposed Aron's thesis for America. There was, he said in the 1950s, an end of ideology. At certain points in his writing that phrase referred to the disappearance of grandiose simplifications about society, a happy event from any point of view. But at other points it announced a controversial trend: the disappearance from Western political life of debate and conflict over fundamental questions, a fading away of the very notion that there should or could be alternative forms of social organization. There was, Bell said,

> a rough consensus among intellectuals on political issues: the acceptance of the Welfare State; the desirability of decentralized power; a system of mixed economy and of political pluralism. . . . [And] the workers, whose grievances were once the driving energy for social change, are more satisfied with the society than the intellectuals. The workers have not achieved utopia but their expectations were less than those of the intellectuals and their gains correspondingly larger.

In a much more recent statement of this theme Bell wrote that the secret of Western society was "productivity." "Economic life could be a non zero-sum game; everyone could end up a winner, though with differential gains." But hardly had the end of ideology been proclaimed than the most tumultuous ideological decade in recent history began—the 1960s. There was a veritable explosion of ideology in the institutions of mass higher education in the advanced economies. And the workers, most dramatically in France and Italy, but in America too, kept challenging the differential distribution of gains in strike after strike.

Was this merely a case of groups struggling bitterly over the terms of a consensus? Or, to take Aron's criterion of the most crucial precondition for the existence of a social class, was there a consciousness on the part

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of those American workers that "their class has a unique destiny and that it cannot fulfill its vocation except by transforming the totality [ensemble] of the social organization"? If the question is posed in this way, so reminiscent of both the early Marx and the early Lukacs, then there was no class struggle in America. Yet it can be demonstrated that American labor was by now more than a mere interest group. Its class consciousness lies somewhere between the polar extremes of revolutionary transformation and interest politics.

There is, for instance, no question that the intrapersonal culture of the working class has been largely subverted by such changes in class structure as the movement of workers to the suburbs or the achievement of limited access to the consumption-oriented (and rigged) society. As Bennet Berger has documented, it is only in the old working-class neighborhoods, usually ethnic in character, that one finds a face-to-face and daily sense of a common class plight. The old coal-mining towns of Appalachia would be the most obvious example of the vanishing conditions under which social class pervades all aspects of life. But even in looking back, it is wrong to romanticize such working-class neighborhoods or to attribute to them, in Serge Mallet's phrase, a "pseudo-globalness." For instance, the Italian workers who were jammed together in New York before and after World War I were more loyal to their village in the old country, and to the *padroni* who exploited them here, than to their class.

Still, it seems obvious today, in contrast to a generation or two ago, that the worker does not enter a class community when he leaves the factory but rather participates more and more in the nonclass world of consumption. That has its positive side, as Herbert Gans discovered in his study of Levittown. The suburbanized worker, he learned, was not homogenized by the experience as much as critics of the '50s had thought. He became less localistic and suspicious, more inclined to participate in civic and political life. But, I would add, in becoming more of a "citizen" he became less of a worker.

Yet, even as there were trends making the impact of classlessness pervasive in the daily life of the individual worker, the labor movement was moving into politics in a much more profound way than in the 1930s. By the end of the '60s, the AFL–CIO, the Auto Workers, and the Teamsters all supported an ongoing political apparatus which, in terms of money, lobbying, campaign workers, and the like, was a major factor in the United States. As David Greenstone documents in his book *Labor in American Politics,* "the emergence of organized labor as a major, nationwide electoral organization of the national Democratic Party was the most important change in the *structure* of the American party system during the last quarter of a century."

This signified the organization of a class, not merely an interest group. An interest group, as Greenstone points out, has very specific demands and avoids committing itself to a single party or a broad social program out of fear that it will compromise its narrow goals. Big corporations, which tend to be Republican, usually maintain a "Democratic" vice-president to insure access to the White House no matter what. But the unions increasingly have become an organized component of the Democratic party. As Greenstone points out, they could have made a classic interest-group deal in the '60s. If the AFL–CIO had agreed to let Everett Dirksen's Congressional override of the Supreme Court's one man/one vote rule go through, Dirksen would have permitted the repeal of the federal enabling clause for state "right to work" laws. Such action on the latter issue would have meant the successful culmination of a trade union campaign of more than two decades' duration. Yet labor maximized its long-range political program by standing fast on one man/one vote rather than giving priority to its short-range organizational goals.

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THE UNIONS thus became a political class force, even if in a fairly undramatic way. There was little rhetoric of class war. Yet the very appearance of national health insurance as a political issue is primarily the result of a campaign waged for years by George Meany and Walter Reuther. Even in the area of race, where so many observers tend to pit blacks against the unions, labor is the single most integrated institution in U.S. society and has done more to raise the living standard of black Americans than any force, except the federal government. Part of the confusion over this momentous trend stems from a reliance on polling data in most academic accounts of the labor movement. It is precisely the characteristic of an opinion poll that it reaches a man or woman as he or she is isolated and poses questions in a kind of political and social vacuum. It is therefore admirably suited to reflect the privatized area of a worker's mind, but what it omits—as elections do not—is the effect of his participation in a workaday world, his membership in a class.

It is a failure to confront this complex reality that makes Derek Bok and John T. Dunlop miss the significance of trade union political action in their study of *Labor and the American Community*. They point out that, as recorded in the opinion polls, the workers have been giving decreasing support to union political action, and that their unions have become more and more political. The polls, I would suggest, do capture some private elements of workers' responses which in recent years have become more marked. But the elections reveal the much more significant fact that by and large those same workers vote massively in national elections for the Democratic candidates endorsed by their union. What Bok and Dunlop miss, then, is the class political attitude of the workers which is not at all the same as, and sometimes even contradicts, the sum totals of their private views. In 1968, for instance, the polls indicated significant support for George Wallace among young white workers in the North during the early fall. Yet when election day came, most of these same workers voted for Hubert Humphrey. Most of them had not changed their personal prejudices in the process, but they had understood that the exigencies of their class situation demanded they vote for a full-employment economy rather than against blacks—i.e., for Humphrey, not Wallace.

This kind of collectivism is far from the romantic Marxian consciousness as defined by Aron, but it is distinctive and clearly goes beyond narrow organizational interests. Moreover, there are a good many indications that the unions will be forced to be even more political in the coming period.

It is now apparent, even to its sophisticated devotees, that the free market is utterly incapable of allocating the resources of a technological society in a rational fashion. In 1971 Daniel Bell, who only a decade earlier had talked of the end of ideology, wrote,

> It seems clear to me that, today, we in America are moving away from a society based on a private enterprise market system toward one in which the most important economic decisions will be made at the political level, in terms of consciously defined "goals" and "priorities." In the past there was an unspoken consensus and the public philosophy did not need to be articulated. And this was a strength, for articulation often invites trials of force when implicit differences are made manifest. Today, however, there is a visible change from market to nonmarket political decision-making.

This marks, Bell concludes, "a movement away from governance by political economy to governance by political philosophy."

It is on the basis of this analysis that Bell has been writing about a "post-industrial" society in which the decisive "new men" are the

> scientists, the mathematicians, the economists and the engineers of the new computer technology. . . . The leadership of the new society will rest, not with business or corporations as we have known them (for a good deal of production will be routinized)

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but with the research corporation, the industrial laboratories, the experimental stations and the universities.

But which values will determine the priorities of these new men? Daniel Bell and John Kenneth Galbraith, whose "educational-scientific estate" is another name for the "new men," assume that these educated and generally liberal administrators of power will be able to pursue their own goals. That hope has been around for years and was brilliantly formulated by Thorstein Veblen in his essay collection *The Engineers and the Price System,* which dates back to 1919. The problem is that, from Veblen's day to this, the corporations have been profit-maximizers—more and more sophisticated in their definition of profit, to be sure—and have placed their own interests above those of the society or of the engineers who work for them. The automobile companies, to take a dramatic recent example, have been fighting auto safety and pollution controls for years.

It is at this point that the politics of the American working class become crucial. For if it is indeed true that economic decisions will be increasingly made by a political rather than a market process; if the question is how to manage the economy rather than whether to do so, then what mass force is there in society to fight for social values? Some "new men" might join a progressive political coalition in their off-duty hours but, under present conditions, their working lives will be dominated by corporate values that oppose, or at least would severely limit, any restrictions on the company's freedom of action. Moreover, the corporations tend to favor reactionary Keynesianism, in which the economy is stimulated by incentives to capital rather than through the meeting of human needs, which is social Keynesianism. The largest and most effective force in the society with a commitment to that kind of progressive Keynesianism is the trade union movement.

In August 1971, when Richard Nixon tacitly admitted the bankruptcy of *laissez-faire* ideas which had created an ingenious recession-inflation, labor reacted in characteristic fashion. Nixon had proposed a federal job cut and a retreat from welfare reform, strict wage controls, vague price controls, and no limit on profits, dividends, and other forms of upper-class compensation. He further proposed an investment tax credit on machinery produced by American companies, a measure that might give business a $5 billion benefit (which would have to be added to the better than $3 billion a year earlier offered by the President in the form of accelerated depreciation for the corporations).

The AFL–CIO Executive Council responded:

> Instead of extending the helping hand of the federal government to the poor, the unemployed, the financially strapped states and cities, and to the inflation-plagued consumer, the President decided to further enrich big corporations and banks. . . . Mr. Nixon's program is based on the infamous "trickle down" theory. It would give huge sums of money belonging to the people of the United States to big corporations. He would do this at the expense of the poor, the state and local governments and their employees and wage and salary earners.

The AFL–CIO was here articulating what Marx called "the political economy of the working class" as it applies in a post-Keynesian society. This response is rooted in the class position of the members of the labor movement. They stand to gain from redistributionist federal policies favoring those either subaffluent or poor; they are opposed to a management of the economy that maximizes the interests of corporations. The differences between these two versions of Keynesianism is, I would suggest, both profound and systematic. Which one of them prevails will determine much about the shape of the future.

When Irving Louis Horowitz asks skeptically why the "interest-determined demands of the working class are somehow instinc-

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tively and intuitively more progressive than those of other sectors," he overlooks the union's stand on such an issue. It is the result, not of instinct or intuition, but of class position. For there is a working class "for itself" with a political consciousness that goes far beyond "job consciousness" and expresses itself in social reformism toward the society as a whole. This class consciousness is not revolutionary but, in practical and programmatic terms, it is remarkably similar to that found among the social democrats of Europe—even when it is sometimes couched in an antisocialist rhetoric. It is not based on that "world apart" of intrapersonal class values which existed at an earlier stage of capitalism. It might be more accurately described, to use a term employed by the British students of the affluent worker, as an "instrumental collectivism."

VI

This working class, very different from the one studied by Marx, is at the moment going through a new mutation—one that has given rise to theories about a "new" working class.

There is no question that a momentous transformation of the American class structure is taking place. In 1980, according to the projection of the Department of Labor, there will be 15.5 million professional and technical workers and 15.4 million operatives (assemblers, truck drivers, bus drivers). That obviously describes a profound shift away from the industrial proletariat of semiskilled workers. In the decade of the '70s government statisticians expect the labor force to grow by about 25 percent. The categories exceeding that rate are professional and technical workers (50 percent); service workers (45 percent); clerical workers (35 percent), and sales workers (30 percent). Those which will lag behind the national average are managers, officials, and proprietors (22 percent); craftsmen and foremen (22 percent); private household workers (15 percent); operatives (10 percent); nonfarm laborers (0.2 percent) and farm workers (0.33 percent).

In part, the new patterns of education in the United States are a reflection of these changes in class. In 1940, only 37.8 percent of Americans between 25 and 29 years of age had completed four years of high school or more; in 1970 that percentage had jumped to 75.4 percent. In 1940, 5.8 percent of the 25–29 age group had four years of college or more, in 1970, 16.4 percent (the latter figure underestimates the recent increase in college degrees since it omits those between 21 and 25 in 1970, i.e., the age group with the highest percentage of graduates). These figures mean, among other things, that many children of the working class are now going to college. In 1969, only 23.7 percent of the family heads of students in college had themselves received a degree, which means they lacked a crucial precondition for middle-class status. The rich were, to be sure, disproportionately represented in higher education: 66 percent of the families with incomes of over $15,000 a year had a child in college in 1969, and 16.4 percent of those with incomes under $3,000.

Yet, when one turns to families with incomes in the general AFL–CIO range, the magnitude of the present social change becomes even more evident. Almost a third of the units in the $5,000–$7,499 group had a child in college, 41.8 percent of those in the $7,499–$9,999 group, and 49.0 percent of those with a $10,000–$15,000 annual income. And since, as Brendan and Patricia Sexton have pointed out, the average trade unionist of today is getting younger, these percentages can be expected to go up as the children of those now youthful workers reach college age.

These trends are likely to continue and deepen in the future. Yet there were some specific circumstances in the '60s that might have made these trends seem even more vigorous than they actually are. The tremendous growth in professional and technical employment was, in part at least,

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caused by federal outlays in space, defense, and education, all of which were cut back in the late '60s. It is sobering to realize that Bell's "new men" and Galbraith's "educational and scientific estate" may have loomed somewhat larger than life because of the impact of such federal policies. Certainly when Washington's cutbacks coincided, not accidentally, with the Nixon recession of the early '70s, there were extremely high rates of unemployment among the educated, including Ph.D.s with scientific and engineering degrees.

The liberal arts component of this surge was unplanned and, in some ways, irrational. As a significant number of such students and graduates realized that their education had no functional relationship to the society they were supposed to enter, they dropped out or sought alternative life-styles. One suspects that their plight was a consequence of America's refusal to face up to the revolutionary character of its technology, and disguising what would have been middle-class unemployment as middle-class education. In any case, college-spending per student will not continue to increase faster than the Gross National Product, as it did in 1950–70.

BUT EVEN WITH these qualifications, it is clear that the new technology is calling into life a new class structure. The analytic problem arises when one tries to make statements about the political and social behavior of the new strata. In *Toward a Democratic Left* I spoke of these people as a "new class" rather than a "new working class" because I wanted to stress the discontinuities signaled by their appearance. In the present context my focus will be upon those factors which drive such professionals, technicians, and others in a trade union direction—toward collective bargaining on the job and political pressure for full-employment policies outside the job. So I speak of a new working class. The choice of terms is not crucial; the careful delineation of a new social reality is.

The new strata are not the old middle class, nor the "new middle class" as it was recognized around the turn of the century. The old middle class was composed of men and women of property and income on a small scale. The "new middle class" was an educated salariat, and it was noted by Karl Kautsky as early as the 1890s. When William English Walling popularized Kautsky's views in 1912, he spoke of the possibility of winning the professional classes, the salaried corporation employees, and a large part of the office workers to socialism. But that stratum does not concern us here. The new stratum on which we focus is not based upon property or employment in the private corporation. Its members work, for the most part, in public, or semipublic sectors—education, health, social services, defense and defense-related industries, aerospace—and they are therefore dependent on federal political decisions for their economic well-being. They also tend to be employed by large organizations and often, for all their educational attainments, they are subordinate participants in a hierarchical system.

Let me be more specific.

First, there are those directly engaged in the development of technology, most of them classed as professional and technical workers. One of the most important subcategories of this group includes engineers and scientific technicians. In 1980, according to federal projections, there will be 1.4 million of them, an increase of 50 percent over the 1966 total, and a percentage that will be rising twice as fast as the national labor-force average. Of these, about 40 percent are technicians who will not have been to college but will have received post-high school training or have acquired sophisticated skills on the job. As the aero-space layoffs in 1970 and 1971 demonstrated, many of these workers are exceptionally vulnerable to policy shifts in Washington. Therefore—and in this they are typical of most of the people in the new strata—they offer a political base for a narrow, corpora-

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tist kind of lobbying, designed to protect particular jobs without reference to social cost or utility; or they could respond to a movement for democratic and social planning.

Second, there are the educated workers in the service industry, a category that will expand at much better than the average rate (45 percent as against 25 percent) for the decade. There are already 2 million of them, including schoolteachers in the National Education Association, nurses who belong to associations carrying out "job actions," people who belong to what Bok and Dunlop call "near unions." These groups engage in collective bargaining and political action but refuse, often for reasons of status, to affiliate with the AFL–CIO. But the service category also includes the members of the American Federation of Teachers (which, with more than 200,000 dues payers, is becoming an important union within the AFL–CIO) and the staff members of the Museum of Modern Art who, in September 1971, won a strike as members of a union local.

The trade unionists and the "near unionists" in the service sector tend to be employed, or financed, by the public in education, health care, and the like. There is every reason to expect that they will continue their present tendencies toward job organization and political involvement. Related to them, but not a part of the new strata, are the blue-collar workers in the public sector: policemen, firemen, hospital attendants, sanitation men. Their family backgrounds, education, and income make them a part of the traditional working class. But, like the professional and educated personnel in this area, they also are highly motivated to become active in politics. And by 1980 they will number in the millions.

Third, there are a number of more nebulous categories. In recent years most of the liberal arts students have looked toward teaching as a career. In *Fortune* magazine's 1968 survey of the college campus, 40 percent of the "forerunners"—the two-fifths of the student body who had rejected the vocational school notion of the college—said that they were interested in teaching. But of the rest only 8 percent were thinking about going into business. Among the 50 percent not accounted for by those two choices will be found drop-outs, life-style pioneers, artists, workers in communications, etc. They are not as easy to identify as the other groupings, yet they often have served as a cultural vanguard, and their presence should be noted.

Finally, there are deep-going changes taking place in traditional professions. In both the law and medical schools of the late '60s and early '70s there was a demand for more relevant education, and resistance to such established professional organizations as the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association. These trends are much too recent to survey in any but the most superficial of fashions, yet it is likely that the possibilities for legal and medical practice among the poor and the minorities, so important to these students and the young graduates, will depend upon federal decisions with regard to the fight against poverty and national health care.

We are dealing then with social categories in change, particularly when one talks of the liberal arts students and the radicals in the traditional professions. And it is obvious that in many aspects of their life, above all in their education and income, most of these people more clearly resemble the salaried middle class than the working class. Yet there are important parallels between the new strata and the traditional working class; indeed, they permit one to speak of a "new working class" so long as it is understood that the phrase cannot be taken as a precise definition. Most of the new strata members occupy subordinate positions in large production units, and this is the basis for the unionism and "near unionism" which has already developed among them. Second, almost all of them are in jobs directly depen-

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dent upon the political process, and this means that their notion of collective bargaining includes political action from the very outset (indeed, the NEA lobbied long before it began to bargain). At the top of the income scale, particularly among the scientists and the engineers, the new strata shade off into the upper reaches of management; at the bottom, among the scientific technicians without college degrees, they merge with the more skilled members of the traditional working class. But in between those limits there is a large new grouping, numbered in the millions, which, for all its middle-class education and income, is impelled by virtue of its position in society toward collective bargaining and politics.

ALL of this should not be taken as implying extreme optimism about a future in which a still dynamic old working class will join with the organized new working class to make the good society. There are, as we have seen, status factors that can, and have, kept these groups far apart. There is a tendency toward corporatism in the new strata and in the old working class as well, with an emphasis on a very narrow and self-interested job protection. But there also is at least the possibility that the progressive tendencies in these two working classes, old and new, could provide the basis for a new political coalition in America dedicated to social and democratic—eventually perhaps social democratic —planning. □

For reasons of space, we are omitting the long section of references that concluded this article.—ED.

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Erazim Kohák

Possessing, Owning, Belonging

The future of socialism, I am convinced, depends more on its ability to provide a new conception of ownership than on its ability to redistribute property or secure social benefits. Those traditional aims retain importance even in a technologically mature society, but now have less power to inspire than they did in the past. For once ownership is coupled with the awesome ability to bring large-scale, irreversible changes in our physical and social environment, the question, Who shall own the world? becomes distinctly secondary to the question, What shall it mean to own? The urgent task today is the humanization of ownership.

I like to believe that this indeed was the concern of the pioneers of socialism, and there is some evidence to that effect. But, as a matter of historical fact, socialist movements have seldom risen above a Robin Hood model of socialism, concerned more with the distribution of property than with its definition. With a few exceptions, socialists, like capitalists, have conceived of ownership as a formal relation, independent of practice: regardless of who tills the soil or uses the tools, the "owner" is the person named in a deed or is the state agency specified by law. Both these "owners" conceive of the essence of that relation as the "right" to derive benefits from the object owned, whether in the form of rent or dividend, or of appropriation of profit by the state, with the corollary "right" to determine how the object shall be used, and in both cases without reference to the persons who actually till the soil or use the tool. In collectivist and capitalist countries alike, the definition of ownership given by the Austrian civil code of 1811,[1] as the right to use, abuse or ignore, destroy, transfer or abandon, remains uncomfortably accurate: ownership continues to be conceived of as the "right," formally defined and independent of practice, to dominate and exploit.

Certainly the Leninist conception focuses on the question, Who shall own the world? As in politics so in economics, the dominant concern of Leninism has been not with the nature of power but with its possession. The Leninist prescription, summed up in the slogan, All Power to the Soviets! has been the transfer of power into the "right hands" rather than its transformation—and this held true in economics as well. The bureaucratic collectivism to which Leninism gave rise effectively transferred ownership from an economic to an ideologico-political elite; but it gave ownership little meaning beyond the traditional one of domination. Not surprisingly, the collectivist owners have matched their corporate counterparts in the ability both to exploit labor and to despoil the environment: the "socialist" pollution exuded by the paper mills of Český Krumlov differs from its capitalist counterpart only in its greater immunity from protest by the disenfranchised labor force. Bureaucratic collectivism can provide little inspiration for the technologically mature societies—including the Soviet Union.

Nor has the social democratic attempt to civilize ownership by holding it to social responsibilities provided a model of a liberated society. The welfare state has probably given

[1] *Common Civil Code,* Register of Judicial Laws, no. 946, paragraph 354. The Code remained in force in Czechoslovakia until 1950.

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its citizens a greater degree of personal freedom and social security than any society since the Industrial Revolution, but it, too, retains the idea that domination is the content of ownership. Tenant vandalism in public housing duplicates the effects of slumlord neglect, while Britain's "socialist" trade unions sometimes wield their power with as much regard for the public weal as did Commodore Vanderbilt. The achievements of welfare-state socialism may be less ambiguous than those of collectivism, but they are hardly inspirational. Taking from the rich and giving to the poor is a noble and even necessary activity, but historically it is the merest beginning. If socialism is to make a unique contribution to both the developing countries and the technologically mature societies, it must offer a vision of a liberated society that would not simply transfer formal ownership or compensate for its inequities but would break the bond between ownership and alienation.

The recognition of this bond is perhaps the distinctive socialist contribution to the making of modern political consciousness. The mere recognition of alienation as a basic trait of modern social existence is itself more Hegelian than Marxist, and it remains so in spite of the recent cult of "the young Marx." Nor is a stress on the importance of the social as against the individual dimension of human experience uniquely socialist. The socialist contribution has been a recognition that alienation is not simply a spiritual phenomenon but also an experiential one, acted out not only in the subjective relations of the ego but also in the tangible relations of human beings to each other and their material world. More specifically, it is the recognition that the modes of ownership inherited from an earlier age are no longer adequate for mediating the relationship of human to human and to their social and material world. The alienation of the human in postindustrial society cannot be overcome by moral exhortation to love and stewardship, whether we call it moral rearmament, Consciousness III, or "a new socialist morality." Something more is needed: a transformation of the rationale and forms of ownership that underlie alienation.

Socialist attempts to achieve this end, however, thus far have done more to discredit than to realize it. From the start, socialist theory and practice were marked by a basic contradiction in the socialist analysis of ownership, its diagnosis of what precisely makes ownership alienating—and so also in its prescriptions for transforming ownership. It is easy to oversimplify, but there is considerable justification for interpreting this contradiction within socialism as the difference between interpreting alienation as the effect of *being deprived of property* and of interpreting it as the effect of *possessing property*. In his "Critique of *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*" Marx sees the impoverishment of the German proletariat—that is, its freedom from property—as the quality that will enable it to carry out an apocalyptic revolt against a system that exploits it and deprives it of property. This difference in turn is reflected in social strategies as contradictory as distributing large estates among the peasants and expropriating small holdings for state farms. Ultimately, it is the difference between the strategy of welfare-state socialism, which seeks to liberate workers from poverty, and of bureaucratic collectivism, which seeks to liberate them from property. The roots of the contradiction may lie in the radically different and socially conditioned experience of property among socialism's founders. The socialist movement, after all, has always been an alliance of outsiders, the specially privileged and the specially deprived—"the progressive intelligentsia" and the proletariat. Intellectuals and proletarians can pledge allegiance to a common ideology and share a common abhorrence of exploitation. But the stereotypes of property that appear obvious to the one are, to the other, radically different.

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Marx may have written of and perhaps for the proletariat, but he was the son of an affluent upper-middle-class family. Most of his life he derived his sustenance not from wage labor but from private means—in large part the largesse of a factory-owner friend, Friedrich Engels. Similarly, Lenin was the son of a banker and a noblewoman—again, anything but a proletarian. By contrast, the mass of their followers had little experience with private means. For the most part, they were workers for whom the wherewithal of daily existence was not a trivial distraction from work but its very content and goal.

Speaking of property as "theft," like Proudhon, or as "soulless commodity," like Marx, reflects the condition of the privileged. The lived bond between a human and his world is forged in labor: tilling the soil or wielding a tool is what makes an object genuinely "mine," not an accidental possession analogous to the object of theft. It is the labor a subject invests in the object that makes the object an extension of his being rather than a soulless commodity. The privileged, no matter how "progressive," inevitably lack this experience. Intellectual work may be no less valuable and productive than that of a laborer, but by its very nature it is experientially distinct from the intellectual's income and the objects he can buy with it. A man of private means or a salaried professional may well "deserve" his reward, but he understandably experiences his sustenance as autonomous and as a distraction from his work. To be sure, such work still has its objective counterparts: the opportunity to write and publish is as real a part of it as tilling the soil and reaping its harvest. Yet the modern intellectual's sense of freedom from immediate material concern—from property—is real. On the level of socially conditioned forms of experience, it is quite understandable that many socialist intellectuals speak of liberation from property, or insist that the forms of property simply do not concern them.

Quite understandably, however, the demand for liberation from property makes as little sense to a worker as a demand for liberation from the freedom of the press would to the intellectual. While frequently supporting demands for expropriation of large productive units, the workers have usually done so in the name of *appropriation* of property. In a laborer's experience property is anything but a soulless commodity. The soil he tills is a part of his very being, the tools he uses are extensions of his muscles. This is no less true of the industrial worker than of the individual craftsman or the small farmer. There may be "propertyless classes," but there can be no "propertyless men" as there are no disembodied souls. The industrial worker may detest the factory where he has spent the major part of his life, but, as with a bad marriage, it is still an intrinsic part of him, his home and his extension in the world. The oldtimers, hanging around the shop after retirement, provide a painful reminder both of the need to belong and of the very basic sense of belonging that work forges between a human and the tools he uses, even when that tool is a steel mill. The worker's wage has to be reduced to the status of bare cash nexus—experientially, it is the tangible bridge between his work and the objects that manifest his care for those who share his immediate world: the warm house, the clothes, the food on the table, even the garish plaster dwarf in his garden. A worker's burden is precisely the lack of property: it is deprivation which seems to hinder his self-realization. His appropriative demand for the ownership of his land or tools, for higher wages, or even for the product of his labor is no fetishism of property at all—it is a demand for recognition of his identity, strictly analogous to a writer's demand for the freedom to publish.

I have stressed the analogy between the two sets of experiences, since on the level of the primary relation of the human and his world that analogy is real. But on the level of socially conditioned forms of experience, it is the difference between the experience

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of the laborer and the experience of the intellectual that counts the most. For the one, ownership holds out a promise of freedom from care and a place in the world, to the other it suggests the bondage to objects. One set of experiences quite naturally issues in a demand for appropriation of property, the other equally naturally in a demand for liberation from property.

This is the contradiction Karl Marx sought to resolve, valiantly and in vain, by interpreting the protest against deprivation and the demand for freedom from property as two stages of a continuous socialist development. The formula resolved nothing, but it papered over the contradiction, and, as long as socialists were in opposition, this was all that was needed.

When revolution in Russia and electoral victories in the West confronted socialists with the responsibility of creating an alternative to capitalist ownership, the compromise broke down. The demand that all humans become owners and the demand that all humans be freed of ownership issued in radically different alternatives to capitalist ownership, both legitimate yet fundamentally incompatible.

In semifeudal Russia, with its diminutive working class and long tradition of elitist autocracy, the revolutionaries set themselves the task of "abolishing property"—and since even Russians are not pure spirits but incarnate men with material needs, they settled for an attempt to make property anonymous, collective: property without individual owners.

Successive Soviet civil codes distinguished three forms of property. The first category, socialist property (owned by the state or the collective), includes all means of production —land, tools, factories—on the assumption that a tool is not something a human uses but rather something he hires another to use. The second category, personal property, is restricted to goods that a person consumes rather than uses in his work, and that he receives from society (in effect from the state, as sole owner of the means of production) in recognition of his needs (health services, vacations) or of his contribution (wages, consumer goods). The third category, private property, refers to possession of means of production, at times tolerated in practice (NEP, private plots) but always condemned in principle as incompatible with socialism.

In collectivist theory, only the means of consumption can be objects of individual ownership—the means of production belong to the collective. And so labor, which in experience belongs to a person perhaps more intimately than anything else, is treated as a means of production. An individual may use it in personal consumption (building a weekend hut, playing a sport), but he may not withhold it (having no job constitutes the felony of parasitism). Nor may he use it to produce a private income even when such use requires no ownership of tools (accepting a fee for guiding a tourist or for making a repair, though common practice, enjoys no legal sanction). The liberation from property is complete. With the exception of wages, which to some extent remain tied to individual effort, the system fulfills the vision of liberation from property.

Although ownership has become anonymous, it is still real. The state, in effect, becomes a holding corporation. Property is not "free"—a factory is not a spontaneous growth like a wild tree, providing fruit to all who'll pick it. It is controlled by the state. The collectivist approach to property is reminiscent of those monastic orders that combined the freedom of poverty with the security of property by having their chapter houses, lands, and flocks owned nominally by the Church at Rome. A more ominous analogy suggests itself as well: slaves, after all, constituted a class free from all property, contributing according to ability and compensated according to minimal need. In the collectivist vision, however, the result was to be perfect freedom, because the own-

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ers would supposedly be the collective of the workers, peasants, and soldiers themselves. The owned would be the owners, thereby effecting a dialectical transformation of total bondage into perfect freedom.

The intent was pure, the result not. As the collectivist bureaucracy came more and more to exercise the prerogatives of owners, collective ownership became formal and abstract. By contrast, the breaking of the bond between individual humans and their most intimate embodiment, their tools and their labor, remained painfully tangible and, in contrast with capitalism, universal. In the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, *socialist property* rapidly becomes not *ours* but *theirs.* The workers notoriously experience no living bond between themselves and their work and tools. Large-scale pilfering, abuse of property, and dismally low work morale on the job—in sharp contrast to the initiative and competence in the nonsanctioned after-hours enterprises and on private plots—testify to a high degree of alienation.

The abolition of private property—in the technical sense—in turn effectively destroyed the living bond that even capitalism had preserved, if only for economic rather than humanitarian reasons, between the small farmer or artisan and the most intimate counterparts of his being, the soil he tills and the tools he uses. The scars left by the forcible expropriation of small holdings, collectivization of cattle and small shops heal slowly if at all, as the perennial crisis of agriculture and services in the Communist countries testifies. Finally, the limitation of personal property—the only legally recognized form of identification between a human and his world—to objects of consumption has given rise to a consumerism that may well be the ultimate in fetishism of goods.

The achievements of collectivism are real, even though, given the grim realities of the Soviet police state, they are easy to overlook. In spite of virtually unanimous opposition to the regime in a country like Czechoslovakia, few Czechs or Slovaks would support the restoration of collective enterprise to private ownership. The failure, however, is no less real, and combined with the strong trade-union tradition of Western socialism, it left Western socialists with little appetite for experimentation with radical changes in ownership.

Social democrats in the West have largely become reconciled with capitalist ownership. What little nationalization they did carry out was predicated not on principle but on pragmatic consideration of public weal. Their strategy in power has focused largely on protecting workers from poverty by pressing the productivity of capitalism into service to relieve its victims. A wide range of social services, ranging from minimum guaranteed income to health care, have gone far toward providing some of the security and freedom of affluence for the nonaffluent, without demanding the bloody price exacted by Communism. Despite the success of that strategy, continued social inequality and labor discontent since the first British Labor victory have shown that no matter how effective the social democratic strategy may be in coping with the ill effects of capitalism, it is not of itself a path to socialism. The idea of a socialist society that fired the imagination of an earlier generation is not, after all, simply of a society in which no one starves. It is the idea of a *liberated* society. It is the vision of a society that would in its economic as well as in its political aspects genuinely belong to the men and women who constitute it rather than to a handful of "owners," alienated from their fellow humans by the privilege of unearned income and in turn alienating them from their world by the claim to "ownership." It is a vision of a society without exploitation —conceived in a society in which a large proportion of the national product is appropriated by some 3 percent of the population in the form of unearned income, a society in which the wage earner, no matter how well compensated, still is exploited.

It is this vision that makes even the vic-

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tims of Communism cling to the idea of socialism and makes idealists in Western socialist countries look—albeit utterly unrealistically—to the Communist model. But the relevance of socialism is contingent on its ability to offer a valid alternative strategy.

Here now, I would submit, we have to start with a more careful analysis of the nature of ownership and the conditions that make it alienating than socialists hitherto have offered. One of the treatises on ownership, which appeared in Czechoslovakia in the years of Stalinism, illustrates the problem clearly: ". . . there is no ownership given by reason, God, or in any other a priori way [that is, natural law ownership] . . . the will of the owner moves within limits given by the will of the ruling class and concrete property relations are determined on a class basis. . . ." [2] The author states the dilemma: ownership, which he regards quite traditionally as a formal claim to possession, must be derived either from pure reason, a priori—or be defined arbitrarily by the "will of the ruling class." Basically, ownership is presented not as a lived reality, but as an arbitrary privilege that must be assigned to a particular individual.

On the level of social reality, from which both socialism and sociology derive their names, this conception simply does not correspond to experience. Here abstract possession is at best a consequence, but in no sense the ground of ownership. Ownership on this level is first of all the experience of a lived interaction between a subject and his world in the course of which meaning becomes actual and matter meaningful. Forms of ownership may vary in different societies and historical periods, but the mutual relation of belonging between a human and his world is more basic than the forms that express it. It is perhaps the basic fact of being human, as basic as "having-a-body," "belonging-to-a-context."

The experience of belonging precedes any formal assignation of property rights, whether by reason, God, or the will of the ruling class. It begins with the child's appropriation of his body as "mine." Perhaps the first step is the recognition of the wiggling toes as a part of myself. It is a process of appropriation of a material counterpart of my being: learning to use my body, making it an expression of my self. Nor is there any magic divide between learning to use my toe and learning to use a tool. In both cases, the "I" is becoming actual—and the objects in which the "I" becomes actual, whether hand or tool, come to "belong to me," as extensions and expressions of my being in the intersubjective world. The acquiring of a body and of its extensions—tools, skills, familiar places, and the recognized place in a social world—is a process of self-realization.

It is important to note, however, that it is not only a process of individuation but a process of socialization as well. The "I" enclosed within my consciousness becomes a part of a social world precisely in the process of embodying itself in objective counterparts. As having-a-body, I am individual, this and no other, but as having-a-body, I am also social, since the body is not private but public, a member and a part both of a material and a social world.

On this level, the ability to own and belong is neither theft nor privilege, but the indispensable counterpart of being actual. It does not alienate—quite the contrary, it is the basis both of individual identity and social participation. Property is in the first place the objective counterpart of my presence in a social and material world. It becomes alienating under special circumstances, and our task is to isolate those circumstances.

For the purposes of political theory, it is crucial to note that collective ownership can similarly be either the basis of individual

[2] V. Knapp, *Ownership in the People's Democracy* (Prague, 1952), p. 35; cited by Rozenal, "Přeměna vlastnictví," *Proměny*, vol. 9, no. 1 (January 1972), p. 61.

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identity and social participation or a source of alienation. Children habitually speak of "our house": here the ownership is collective, expressing a collective experience. We live in this house together, together we work on it, keep it up, enjoy it: it is ours, and in each individual case, the house is no less my own for being ours. As with individual ownership, there is nothing prima facie alienating about collective ownership when it is an expression of lived experience.

The disruptive element again enters with the formalization of the claim of ownership. When a child expresses the claim, "This is my house (I need not work on it, help keep it clean, but) I have a right to it (for instance, invite friends here) because it is mine," that claim is rightly resented by her siblings. Conversely, when parents appoint themselves the vanguard of the family and preempt the right of making decisions concerning "our" house, the collective ownership becomes alienating and evokes an individualistic, appropriative response: "(this is our house, but) this room is mine—(I live in it, clean it, and) I'll decide what color wallpaper will go on the walls."

With this example we can formulate a provisional principle: the forms of ownership are liberating, sustaining the individual's freedom of identity and participation, if they express a lived relationship of belonging. They become alienating if they disrupt such belonging in the name of an abstract claim to possession. The basis of socialist ownership is belonging, the special reciprocal relationship that life and work forge between a human and a definite part of the social and material world—an object, a place, a right. In that special relationship, a human defines his identity as well as his social participation. The institutions of a socialist society must respect and express that relationship rather than deny it.

I am not presenting this principle as a call for a subjective change in attitude toward property. Desirable though such change may be, it is more likely to follow from rather than lead to institutional changes. Rather, I am presenting it as an alternative rationale for the critique of capitalist institutions and for designing the institutions of a socialist society. Socialists have criticized past institutions and devised new ones (or, in the name of humanity, refrained from designing new ones) on the assumption that ownership is alienating in virtue of being "private" and that, consequently, public ownership, simply in virtue of being public, would be nonalienating. On the principle, "private bad, public good," they have created, in Eastern Europe, a system of ownership that is not private—and yet is no less alienating than capitalist ownership. Although this system has no "private" owners, the factory worker is no less excluded from participation in the direction of an enterprise and from sharing in the proceeds of production. In contrast to capitalism, however, on the level of small-scale enterprise, the principle, "public ownership good, private ownership bad" led to the systematic elimination of ownership based on self-labor which survived in the capitalist economy—individual enterprise in small production, distribution, and service. Not the protests of expropriated capitalists but the staggering human, social, political, and economic cost of the dogmatic crusade against individual enterprise was the major factor inducing Western socialists to retreat to the humane but innocuous aims of a welfare state compatible with capitalism.

Yet institutions in the East did not fail because they were "too socialist." Nor did they fail because of an erroneous subjective attitude to property. They failed because the rationale in terms of which they were designed, "public good, private bad," did not identify correctly these characteristics of ownership that make it alienating. It led socialists to ignore the pressing problem of alienation in large-scale productive complexes—after all, once nationalized, such enterprises were public and in principle good, even if the workers did not seem to realize it.

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Socialist institutions do not have to wait for a new subjective attitude to be effective —that would be a long wait indeed. They do, however, have to be based on a principle that correctly identifies the root of alienation —the divorce between work and ownership. Against the collectivist principle, "public good, private bad," I would sum up the principle I am advancing as "self-labor good, hired labor bad," or in more general terms, applicable to large-scale production, "participating labor good, exploited labor bad."

Individual ownership of one-man and cooperative enterprises, essential in the primary and tertiary sectors of the economy, is entirely compatible with that principle. In such enterprise ownership is fully coextensive with the belonging established by life and labor. Yet, collectivist ownership, vested nominally in "the people" at large but effectively exercised by a centralized state agency, both in the direction of production and in appropriation of the product, is just as incompatible with that principle as capitalist ownership. The state, even a state claiming to "represent the people," does not contribute labor and so cannot own. The only "owners" of a factory can be the women and men whose labor makes that factory a producing unit and transforms a soulless machine into a means of production.

Certainly, a socialist factory, just as a capitalist one, must distinguish ownership and technical direction. The first is based on participation, the second on expertise. Directors and managers have to be hired on the basis of competence, not participation. The workers alone can be the owners: whether directly or through elected representatives, they alone can hire (and fire) directors and managers and decide how proceeds will be used and distributed. The basic socialist principle here is that those who work also own—both the tools and the product of their work—and that no one, whether individual, corporation, or state agency, whether in virtue of inheritance, stockholding or a nationalization decree, can or need to possess tools he does not use or value he does not create.

In this sense, socialism is a direct continuation of the struggle for freedom that has motivated the social development of the West since the middle ages. In this struggle the enemies have been both the possessors —the individuals who claimed possession of the world—and the ingrained human fear of freedom.

The Reformation fought the first round in the struggle against the possessors—and against the need for possessors. Fitfully, gropingly, with many false starts and lapses, it has given us the conception of moral community as the *communio viatorum,* a community of free human beings, under God, who dare assume what in the jargon of another era was called "the freedom through which Christ made us free." It is the daring vision of humans who give up both the constraints and the comforts of a Vicar of Christ—or, in Dostoevsky's image, of the Grand Inquisitor who would shoulder the ultimate responsibility; of humans willing to assume the freedom and the responsibility for decisions of faith and morals. It is the vision of a free Church that belongs to the believers who constitute it—a community of believers without a human possessor.

The struggle for democracy was a continuation of this battle. The greatest obstacle to a politically free society has been the inability and unwillingness of men and women to imagine a state without a possessor, without a king or a prince or at least a class upon whom to shift the ultimate responsibility for social decisions. Cromwell's commonwealth failed because humans could not conceive of a state without a possessor and because humans were willing to give up their freedom in exchange for a king who would make the social decisions and bear the responsibility. The Marxist conception of the "leading role of the Party" thrives on that lingering inability of men and women to

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conceive of a state that is the public servant of a community of free humans and so has no possessor. The "leading role of the Party" thrives on the unwillingness of humans to assume the responsibility of freedom: it is easier to grumble about "them" than to assume the responsibility that belongs to us and to me individually when we are free. Democracy is the political equivalent of the Reformation: the conception of society as community of free humans who accept the responsibility for governing themselves and dare do without masters upon whom the blame can be shifted.

In retrospect the idea of a possessor in morals or in politics appears entirely fortuitous. Yet a century ago in central Europe it seemed no less self-evident that a village could not simply belong to the farmers who lived and worked in it—had to "belong" to this or that count or duke who had long since ceased to exercise any administrative function and who might simply have "bought" a group of villages he had never seen from another count—to whom they may have been "awarded" in turn by an emperor whose armies had conquered the land a hundred years ago. In the Austrian imperial army, each regiment had its possessor—*Inhaber*—a civilian aristocrat with the honorary rank of a colonel whose sole function was to "own" the regiment—and that, too, seemed completely natural.

Democracy broke the old habit in politics: today the challenge is to break it in economics as well. The great, irreversible achievement of collectivism has been precisely that, as the Reformation in morals and democracy in politics, it has freed its subject—enslaved in every other way—of the pernicious habit of assuming that, of course, every industrial enterprise must have an "owner." No one who has lived in Eastern Europe can get over his first shock of incomprehension upon being told in the West that this or that factory complex "belongs" to the Smith family—who may live a thousand miles away, may have nothing to do with this factory, and yet is said to possess it and to claim a right to its proceeds. It is a shock analogous to the shock the Americans of a hundred years ago experienced on being told, in central Europe or in Russia, that a particular village "belonged" to a certain count. Collectivism did not liberate the workers—it could not do that—but it did demonstrate the utter absurdity of the claim that the investment of labor, capital, or effort does not only create a personal belonging and a right to compensation, but earns for a person's descendants a claim to perpetual possession.

As Marx recognized, corporate capitalism is teaching an analogous lesson, even if far more slowly and less painfully. By replacing the individual enterpreneur with a mass of anonymous stockholders, it illustrates the fictitious absurdity of the idea of possession —and at the same time makes the "possessor" superfluous. This is not a question of technical direction of an enterprise: certainly, any working collective, especially one as complex as a modern corporation, must include experts and technicians charged specifically with the direction of an enterprise. What it does not need is an "owner," whether individual or private. The workers may not be able, in their spare time, to direct a factory, but they—and only they —can own it: directors can be hired by those to whom the enterprise belongs, whose labor makes it genuinely theirs—the employees, from the manual worker to the managers.

The Yugoslavs accomplished this with a system of Workers' Councils, elected by all the employees, which do not displace the expert directors but do displace the "owners." The Czechoslovaks moved in the same direction—until Soviet occupation restored central direction and state ownership. In America, despite isolated experiments, the idea of a Workers' Council made up of elected representatives of employees and possibly elected representatives of the public might seem too discontinuous with native

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development, but a system of issuing voting shares solely on the basis af actual involvement in the work of the enterprise—that is, the lived belonging—is entirely feasible. It would be even consistent with the use of nonvoting shares as a source of investment capital (though the sale of such shares, because of the pernicious social effect of unearned income, remains problematic unless it is restricted to other socialist enterprises).

The mechanics may differ, but the principle remains the same: socialist ownership is not a legal fiction but a living relationship forged by life and work. No one can be denied the ownership he creates by his work—and no one, whether the state or an individual, can claim abstract "possession."

In the case of humans working individually—and even in a highly sophisticated economy such labor remains essential, especially in the tertiary sector of service and distribution and in some sectors of agriculture—that principle will result in "private" ownership. If the process of labor is individual, so is that of ownership. An individual clearly can, by his own work, "build a business"—and claim it as his own. What he cannot do within the limits of socialist ownership is to "hire" another to work "for" him. Such labor would again become alienating: the employee, by his labor, also builds a stake in the business. He can be a partner, whether on a straight cooperative basis or in proportion to the labor he invests, but he cannot be what earlier rhetoric aptly termed a "wage slave." To be sure, in practice it may well be necessary for economic reasons to permit the hiring of employees, but the point is that it is a matter of privilege, granted for reasons of common welfare—and always subject to revision. It cannot become a matter of right.

In the case of two or more humans working together, as in a three-man barbershop, a repair service, or a collective farm, the principle of socialist ownership—that ownership reflects labor—would take the form of cooperative ownership, since the work is done cooperatively. In the case of a factory, it would entail a collective ownership, exercised by the collective through a Workers' Council. Finally, in the case of public service, whether in transportation, medicine, or basic industry, it would entail social ownership, exercised by a council of elected representatives of the employees and elected representatives of the public they serve. Throughout, however, the principle is the same: ownership follows labor; the only owner of a tool, whether that tool is 200 m^2 of a backyard plot or a steel mill, is the human who uses that tool, whether individually, cooperatively, or collectively.

IF SOCIALISM is to inspire and guide social change and not simply apply ideological smokescreens or patchwork remedies to assorted social ills, it must carry out the liberation the Reformation carried out in morals and democracy in politics and in economics. The attempt to do this by retaining the conception of ownership as a formal "right" to dominate and exploit, but transferring that "right" from corporate to institutional owners has failed disastrously—just as the attempt to solve problems of faith and morals by transferring the "ownership" of the Church from the pope to the presbyters failed in religion and the attempt to solve political problems by transferring power from hereditary kings to enlightened despots failed in politics, most recently in Russia. In both areas, it was democracy that succeeded, by transferring responsibility to those over whom power heretofore had been exercised. Democracy might succeed in economics as well. The future relevance of socialism depends on its ability to extend democracy into economics: to substitute for the idea of ownership as a possessor's formal "right" to dominate and exploit the socialist domocratic idea of ownership as a social formalization of the lived reality of belonging. □

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Octavio Paz

The Centurions of Santiago

The following comments on the Chilean military coup were written by the distinguished Mexican writer last fall. They appeared in the Mexican journal Plural *and are reprinted here wtih the kind permission of the author. They seem to us significant beyond the immediate response to the coup.*—ED.

Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay—now Chile. One can no longer breathe on our continent. Latin America has become a pyramid of ruined ideas and victims' bones. At the top, a tribunal of uniformed and bemedaled pygmies legislates, excommunicates, and executes nonbelievers. All the while, Nixon washes the stains of Watergate off his hands in the bowl that Kissinger holds for him, Brezhnev opens new psychiatric hospitals for incurable dissidents, Chou En-lai woos Pompidou in Peking and alerts Western Europe against "the Russian peril." The peace that is being built by the superpowers rises from peoples' humiliations, dissidents' sacrifices, and the remains of fallen democracies: Greece, Czechoslovakia, Uruguay, Chile. Russian tanks in Prague, Pentagon-trained and -armed generals in Santiago have accomplished the same "demonstration": democracy and socialism are incompatible.

To condemn the action of the Chilean military and the international conspiracies which made it possible might assuage our rightful indignation. It is not enough. Protest has become a ritual and a rhetoric. Ritual may afford relief to the one who performs it but it can no longer infect or convince. Rhetoric wears out itself and us. I do not protest protests: I ask that they may be accompanied or followed by an analysis of the facts. Outrage is ethical but it cannot take the place of a policy. Forsaking critical thinking means forsaking a tradition that shaped revolutionary thinking. It means also to espouse, if not the ideas at least the techniques of one's adversary: excommunication, exorcism, recitation of canonical authorities, invective. What has happened in Chile was a great tragedy. It also was a great defeat. One more in a long series of defeats. Why? How? We must examine national and international conditions, weigh the social forces involved, think about the methods applied and recognize—however it may humiliate the leaders and the theoreticians enmeshed in their fragile schemes—that the results have been disastrous.

The Latin-American Left is struggling against formidable enemies: North-American imperialism—its international flanks more or less undisturbed today, thanks to its double entente with the Soviet Union and China; the oligarchies, the military castes, and what remains of the old conservative parties. In some cases, as happened in Chile, it has turned the middle class, its natural ally at this historic juncture, into an opponent. But the Left is also struggling against itself. Not only is it divided into many factions, it is also—more seriously and crucially—torn between the relative weakness of its forces and the geometric absoluteness of its programs. It is as if we tried to drill rocks with a needle. In Western Europe, the strength of the French and the Italian Left contrasts with the cautious modesty of their programs: the exact opposite prevails in Latin America. It is hardly necessary to add that radical extremist groups—of which the MIR of Chile is but the latest example—invariably act as a provocation. Extremists come from the middle class, and their actions and ideologies

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are largely the product of despair, psychological insecurity, and unconscious suicidal tendencies, as were those of the young fascists during the decade before World War II.

The most urgent task of *truly* democratic and socialist movements in Latin America is to develop viable programs and to design a new strategy and new tactics. I stress the word *truly* because I am convinced that socialism without democracy is not socialism. The defeat of Chile exposes the Left in Latin America to serious moral and political temptations. The first is to think that the tragic experiment of Salvador Allende has closed the democratic road to socialism. This is a simplistic sophism made attractive by its very simplism. Recalling the recent failures of revolutionary violence is enough of a rebuttal. Violence and legality are variables and depend upon national circumstances as well as upon the international situation. The conditions in Chile were not auspicious, that's all. François Mitterand, the French socialist leader, thinks that in France things would have gone differently: "It is absurd to try and compare an underdeveloped country with an industrialized one. Ours will be the socialism of affluence."

In a recent article ("Toward a Democratic Socialism," in *Le Monde*, September 24, 1973), Maurice Duverger writes about Chile and makes a few remarks worth pondering:

> The first requirement on the road toward socialism in a Western country such as France is to reassure the middle class about its lot under the future government, so as to separate it from the core of big business doomed to disappear or to be put under stringent controls. The assumption is that the change toward socialism will happen very gradually and very slowly, so that at every step of the way a sizable part of those who were fearful at the start can be won over. The lot of small businesses must be clearly defined, and it must be shown to be better than under monopolistic or oligopolistic capitalism. The nationalization of major companies must in no case be accompanied by the wildcat sit-down strikes or takeovers that proved so harmful to the Allende government. Public order must be firmly maintained, even though it may constrain spontaneous popular demonstrations. Such requirements are drastic and it is understandable that the radical Left—and a few others—should reject them. Might they be reminded of Lenin's remark: "Facts are stubborn"? Whether or not reality is unpleasant, it is real. Besides, the revolutionary road to socialism is harder yet then the democratic road for Western countries.

And I add: more so for underdeveloped, dependent countries.

THE QUESTION of the so-called incompatibility between socialism and democracy should be changed thus: Is socialism possible in an underdeveloped country, barely or insufficiently industrialized, with the added misfortune of depending almost entirely on the export of a single commodity? Marx and Engels would have categorically answered "No." Both conceived of socialism as a tool for social change first and for economic change only second; I mean that for them socialism would be the product of industry and not a means to achieve industrialization. Engels repeatedly stressed that it was impossible to skip historical stages. For its founders, socialism would increase and rationalize production and distribution in industrial society but it was not endowed with the mission of creating an industrial society. The proletariat, the revolutionary class per se, is not the parent but the child of the industrial age.

Nothing is further from original Marxist thinking than Stalin's or Mao's economic "voluntarism"—to say nothing of the "social-ist" asceticism that Guevara pretended to impose upon workers. Despite the changes that the doctrine underwent, none of the followers, from Kautsky to Trotsky and from Rosa Luxemburg to Lenin, ever asserted that it was possible to establish authentically socialist governments in nonindustrialized countries that depend on a single product. Neither did Stalin. The ideologist of "socialism in one country" always considered it a determining prerequisite that the country would have the magnitude and resources of a continent—the U.S.S.R. True, we have seen such countries as Cuba or Albania call themselves socialist. But are they? Engels called Bismarck's Germany "barracks' socialism." If socialism, in the strict sense of the word, cannot at this stage of world history be the cure to the woes of the Latin-American nations, what could be a minimum program of the Left? That is the question we should all ask ourselves. The future of our countries depends to a large extent on the answer we can find to it. Or is it too late?

To fight an adversary, we have to know him.

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The Chilean coup displays the traditional features of Latin-American "pronunciamentos." We Mexicans will be reminded of General Huerta's uprising and President Madero's assassination. In the Chilean upheaval, however, several distinctive traits appear: the mobilization and manipulation of the middle class and of impoverished "little people," xenophobia, sexual puritanism (dictatorships are modest), and, above all, the intention of creating a corporate state in which the army would occupy the privileged position that was the party's in Mussolini's Italy. Such actions as the looting of Pablo Neruda's house and the destruction of his books and papers underline the similarity, although this is not really fascism but a patched-up "ideological cover." The new regime in Chile was no sooner born than it distinguished itself from that in Brazil. Brazil has a technocratic military dictatorship based on domestic and foreign capitalism; it has no ideology and, so far, has not made political use of the middle class. In Chile, such social mobility as was created in Brazil by economic development will not serve as a safety valve for social tensions. The military regime in Santiago will be confronted with the same serious economic limitations that confronted Allende.

A STRANGE TRIANGLE: facing the military regime of Chile, that of Brazil; facing them both, the ambiguity of Peronism. The failure of traditional democratic ideologies—and its most striking examples were the Argentinian radicals and Christian Democrats in Chile—is immediately responsible for the advent of all these *bizarre* regimes, in the sense that Baudelaire gave the word: of a "singular" horror. I wrote: "immediately responsible" because mediate causes are deeper and go back to the failure of our wars of independence, great breeding grounds for caudillos. Latin-American militarism was born with independence although its roots are older and spring from its Spanish-Arab past. It is a grievous panorama: at one extreme the nationalist populism of the Peruvian military, at the other the technocratic military dictatorship of Brazil. Our countries are still the country of *Tirano Banderas.** Valle Inclan's character is at the same time a monster and intensely real. His is a reality without ideas, which does not mean a dumb reality. *Tirano Banderas* is the barbarous reply of Latin America's reality to the unreality of ideologies.

The worst intoxication is ideology. Reality must be approached with humility. We need to draw up programs that correspond to our history and to our present. In the light of the terrible experience of the 20th century, such programs will have to be democratic—although they do not have to be imitations of Western bourgeois democracies. They will have to contain the seed of a socialism to come and, above all, they will have to propose models of economic development and of social organization that would be less inhuman and less unjust than those of both the capitalist regimes and of "bureaucratic socialism." We lack, in equal amounts, political imagination and intellectual restraint. Latin America is a continent full of rhetoric and violence—two forms of pride, two ways of ignoring reality. We must oppose the monstrous but real originality of *Tirano Banderas* with the human originality of policies both realistic and rational. We now have a literature and we have art (one of whose creators was Neruda himself): when will we have political thought?

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* A character from the novel of the same title by the Spanish writer Ramon del Valle Inclán, a prototype of the Latin-American caudillo.

Translated from the Spanish by MONIQUE FONG □

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LETTERS

Who's at Center?

Editor:

I started to read the article "Are American Jews Turning to the Right?" [by Bernard Rosenberg and Irving Howe] in your Winter issue with considerable interest. I stopped reading it before the end of the very first page when you referred to "those Jewish intellectuals who wish to keep the liberal community within the centrist camp of such politicians as Hubert Humphrey and Scoop Jackson." You lost me then. First of all, I don't like the denigrating attitude toward Hubert Humphrey. But, if supporting Hubert Humphrey is to be your litmus test for determining a turn to the Right, then there isn't much validity to your argument. In addition, this tactic is counterproductive. I have attended meetings with Irving Howe where the consensus of the meeting was that there was a great need to reestablish a really broad, liberal coalition. Any coalition that excludes people who support Hubert Humphrey and people like him is not only unrealistic but is doing the liberal cause a great disservice.

What is your basis for lumping Hubert Humphrey with Scoop Jackson? Their voting records? In December 1971, the *ADA World* published the lifetime legislative record of all the potential 1972 candidates for the Democratic nomination for president. The ADA stated, "Hubert Humphrey, a founder of ADA, has the highest ADA voting record of all potential presidential candidates. His average is a stunning 97% for his 17 years in the Senate and he scored 100% during 10 of those years." Senator Edward Kennedy scored 91.5 percent, Senator McGovern 87 percent, and Senator Jackson 83 percent.

But you will say that was the old Humphrey (and the old Jackson). Well, let's look at the record of the new Humphrey. A day or two before I received the Winter issue of DISSENT, I also received the current issue of the *ADA World* in which the voting record of the first session of the 93rd Congress for 1973 was analyzed. Jackson had a 55 percent voting record, McGovern 80 percent, Humphrey 85 percent, Stevenson 85 percent, Bayh 85 percent, Kennedy 90 percent and Mondale 95 percent. On one issue they all voted wrong according to ADA—the confirmation of Ford. (I, personally, would not have included that issue as one of the test issues because of other complicating factors, which would mean that had a different test issue been substituted, the probabilities are that all senators would have increased their liberal quotient by 5 percent.) This business of lumping Humphrey and Jackson is very strange. You would never lump Javits, Humphrey, and Jackson as Centrists. You would consider Javits a liberal. But he showed up in the first session of the 93rd Congress with an ADA voting record of 55 percent—the same as Jackson.

I really would like to read an article on the subject, "Are American Jews Turning to the Right?" But I would first require a clearer definition of "Right" and "Centrist." Second, if we are to reestablish our old liberal coalition—in which Jews thrive—let's not be so divisive.

MARVIN ROSENBERG
New York

IRVING HOWE *replies:*

Useful as ADA ratings may be, there are many things they don't tell us. They don't tell us where political figures are placed within the struggles of groups, tendencies, and outlooks that have been taking place in the Democratic party for several years and still continue today. The groups that now support Jackson and hope to make him the Democratic presidential candidate in 1976 have, by and large, been those that in the past supported Humphrey: the AFL-CIO leadership, some urban machines, party spokesmen and intellectuals who were sharply anti-McGovern and recently organized, if I recall the name correctly, the Coalition for a Democratic Majority. Such people, for good or bad, form a political tendency within the Democratic party. These people are likely to have supported the Vietnam war (remember?); they are inclined toward a Cold War-ish approach to international affairs; they tend to be hostile toward the raising of new social issues, while often supporting economic proposals made by the AFL-CIO; they are likely to be contemptuous (not merely critical) of insurgent constituencies among labor, youth, women, and within the Democratic party. I know of no evidence that Hubert Humphrey has dissociated himself, or wishes to dissociate himself, from this group within the Democratic party.

In making the above observations, which seem to us merely factual, we didn't propose that Humphrey or anyone else be "excluded" from "a really broad, liberal coalition." Such a coalition is necessary for the next election. But the question that is going to be fought out in the next few years is: in which direction will that coalition lean—toward, say, George Meany or Leonard Woodcock? Toward the views put forward by CDM or the views put forward by ADA? And there are differences, significant differences, which are symbolized by the rival candidacies of Scoop Jackson and, let's say, X.

The possibilities for an electoral coalition remain, but so do the internal tensions among its potential elements. Some people couldn't stomach McGovern; others wouldn't be able to stomach Jackson. I see no reason to want Humphrey in the forefront, if only because he carries on him, like a Scarlet Letter, the brand of Vietnam. That doesn't mean that people on the Left should re-

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fuse to collaborate in the next presidential election with people who supported the Vietnam war. It does mean we'd very much prefer that this collaboration be conducted in behalf of a candidate who didn't have the Vietnam brand on him and in behalf of a program that wasn't the handiwork of the boys around Scoop.

Anyway, I hope that by now Marvin Rosenberg, veteran of many good causes, will have gotten past the sentence that "lost" him and continue to read our article. □

What of Caliban?

Editor:

With regard to Mr. Murray Hausknecht's article "Caliban's Abode," in your Fall 1973 issue, I have some questions which may seem only impertinent but are intended to be serious.

1. What is a "backward-looking view of man"? Is it to be contrasted with a forward-looking view of man? If so, what would such a view be? How would it differ from the view of man which is neither forward nor backward but is simply accurate?
2. Would this backward man be like a Caliban?
3. Are there no modern Calibans?
4. If there are no longer Calibans, why then do we have laws?
5. Has the modern world eliminated all "extreme cases" (the Strauss quotation)? And are there no instances in which natural justice pertains?
6. Is it possible for us to appreciate the relationship between Prospero and Caliban without thinking of Prospero as a class enemy?
7. Has Mr. Hausknecht (simply) reversed Mr. Banfield's class prejudgment? Is it enlightening to replace one prejudice with another?

WILLIAM E. JOHNSTON, JR.
Claremont, California

MURRAY HAUSKNECHT *replies*:

Some statements about humans are "accurate" in the sense that they are demonstrably true: only women can bear children. Other statements are more problematic: humans are aggressive because they are by nature so. Here the demonstrably true is intertwined with an *a priori*. Many of the more interesting statements of philosophers and social theorists are of this kind, and to think about them simply in terms of "accuracy" can be misleading.

"Backward-looking view of man" is not a particularly felicitous phrase, since it encouraged Mr. Johnston to think of "forward-looking view of man" and its unfortunate Rotarian connotations. (On the other hand, he must bear sole responsibility for "backward man"; it cannot be derived from anything I wrote.) My phrase refers to a view of man (a term here referring to the species) that emphasized the immutability of his nature with a special stress on what Leo Strauss called "the lower impulses." It is "backward-looking" because it assumes that man is a finished product; what was true of him in the past is true of him now and will be true of him in the future. And, yes, there is a "forward-looking view of man": it questions the postulate of immutability and assumes humans have potentialities that can be and are realized under appropriate social and economic circumstances. It assumes, further, that the future can be different from the past, although whether it will be depends, in part, on policy-makers not adopting the untenable notion that modern working and lower classes are "born devils" with "canker'd minds."

If these contrasting views of man are what Mr. Johnston means by "class prejudgments," then, (again) yes, I do think my perspective is enlightening. □

Metamorphosis of the Mother

Jeanne Binstock (in "Metamorphosis of the Mother," DISSENT, Fall 1973) argues that "succeeding waves of technologies liberated first the middle classes, then the working classes, and now the young and the female sex from the Hobbesian natural world in which the strong dominated the weak." What is the meaning of liberation for Binstock? The strong surely continue to dominate the weak in modern society—not so much the "naturally" weak any longer, but the *powerless*, and this domination is at least as all-pervasive as that which pertained in the Hobbesian war of all against all.

The modern powerless, those putatively "liberated" persons of whom Binstock writes, face a capitalistic-technological structure of vast inequality and social stratification that denies to its underclasses (including the un- or under-employed, women, the elderly, blacks, and other minorities, as well as the physically and mentally handicapped) access to those social goods that set the contours of life for the more privileged.

Binstock glosses over this inequality by concentrating on technological change. All else, including ideology, is a spin-off of technology. She assures us that there will be an "occupational shift

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of great numbers of former mothers in new occupations of postindustrial society." Here as elsewhere she confounds possibility with certainty. She nonethless insists, without a single reference to politics, that the "new occupations" of the future will be filled by "former mothers." Political power, structures, and ideologies play no role in her scenario.

We know, however, that female economic participation is influenced by political decisions. For example: women were absorbed into the work force in large numbers during World War II. The number of working women increased by 3 million and climbed proportionately from one worker in four to one in three between 1939 and 1944. Toward the war's end women were forced out of jobs as a result of a series of politico-economic decisions, including withdrawal of government funding for day care, which would not have been foreseen if one had looked to technological factors alone. By January 1946, there were 4 million less women working than there had been at the peak employment of the war, and the hourly wage rate of those employed women was rolled back.

Given an ideology of women's liberation confronting a system of male dominance, who would be willing to predict the outcome solely on the basis of technology? Such naiveté is particularly inexcusable when the possibility of slowdown in economic growth, constriction of jobs, and even enforced curtailment in the manufacture and use of labor-saving, energy-using devices(which have freed women from some tasks associated with domesticity) is at least as likely as Binstock's technological bliss-out.

To buttress her case for the phasing-out of motherhood, Binstock draws an image of the contemporary mother replete with clichés and overstatements. "Tender care" by women of their children has become "excessive scrutiny." Children are currently "bound to parents" by means of guilt. These assertions are as objectionable as were all those corny paeons to blessed motherhood and celebrations of noble, self-sacrificing Mom. Both are exaggerations—one a positive idealization that makes of mothers inhuman saints, and the other, a negative idealization that turns mothers into obsessed meddlers and guilt-inducers.

Binstock says she is concerned with "good mothering," mothering that goes beyond seeing to a child's physical well-being. Yet she outrageously suggests that penicillin has replaced "patience, nurturance, endurance, tenderness" in the modern era, and that motherhood has been pared down to a "marginal" three-hour-a-day job, as easily done by someone else. Implicitly she advances the notion that children can, with minimal care by paid caretakers and the use of antibiotics, rear themselves. Those of us concerned not only with liberation for women but with what persons are or ought to be must reject any view of the future that neglects the legitimate needs of children for patience, nurturance, endurance, and tenderness.

Binstock wants to have it both ways. She insists that those characteristics presently considered feminine, including the use of "seductive tricks" to achieve goals, are merely an outgrowth of traditional female life situations. She wants women to relinquish these artificially induced character traits so that their unique "biological energies will emerge." "Seduction and synthesis," and a "desire to synthesize in an internal explosion of feeling," will define the contributions of women on the highest levels in her future technological society. Binstock's "unique" female traits are nothing but contemporary stereotypes of the female writ large.

Binstock imagines an androgynous future in a postindustrial society awash in boundless goodies. Women will be liberated "whether they want to be or not." But if the future is an ineluctable outgrowth of technological advance, why the caveat "whether they want to be or not"? To include "want" one must hold to a belief in choice, which, in turn, admits the possibility that rational and responsible individuals may resist the "inevitable" by making choices that do not mesh with the present variants of technological development.

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

JEANNE BINSTOCK *replies:*

Subscribers to the "blame theory" of history refuse to recognize the theoretical possibility that lawful processes determine the course of human as well as physical events. It is easier to divide the world into good guys and bad guys. Then it is only a matter of good guys wresting power from the bad guys, and if you think you're one of the good guys, it stills the pain. To predict historical development as a technical problem is to take an entirely different view of history, which involves both an attempt at intellectual and moral neutrality and the belief that all humans, regardless of race, creed, sex, or national origins, have equal limitations and potential capacities.

The power of all human groups has increased markedly in the past few hundred years, particularly in the last hundred years. I include in this the power to eat regularly, live too long, and to choose to bear children.

Why hasn't it increased more? Why has it increased so much? Why is it unevenly spread? All these are interesting questions and worthy of, finally, one aesthetic (scientific) answer. I pick on technology in this exploration because it is clearly something that produces change—food in our stomachs, money in our pockets, babies in our bellies, and ideas in our heads. As to "good guys and bad guys," I don't believe it. When women get power, they too will abuse it, probably as much as men. It is human to both use and abuse power: it is also human to want love and meaning. I am interested in where we came from and where we are going, and who we might become, on technical grounds of biology and cultural evolution, without calling for action. □

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